

A
REPLY

TO

John Atkinson's

PRETENDED

ANSWER

TO

Absolute Predestination
Not Scriptural.

By *JANE FEARON.*

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A R E P L Y

T O

John Atkinson's Pretended Answer

T O

Absolute Predestination not Scriptural.

IN Answer to Query 1. he saith, Page 57, 58.
 ' *Adam's* Loss and Fall, was by Reason, of his
 ' Transgression; he transgressed, and there-
 ' by fell; and his Fall, was his Transgression: And
 ' by his Transgression, he lost God's Image, and
 ' exposed Himself and Posterity to the threatened
 ' Curse. *Adam* himself was the Sinner, and his
 ' Sin was not at all chargeable on God's absolute
 ' Decree from Eternity; and therefore God may
 ' justly call *Adam* to Account for his Sin, and
 ' punish him according as it deserved.

Reply. So far he agrees with us, and hath fairly
 given away the Cause.

But the very next Sentence saith, ' Yet not-
 ' withstanding God decreed to permit *Adam's* Sin,
 ' and all the Sin that issued from it; which is ma-
 ' nifest from *Acts* 4. 27, 28. *For of a Truth, against*
 ' *thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both*

‘ *Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the
 ‘ People of Israel, were gathered together, for to do
 ‘ whatsoever thy Hand and thy Counsel determined be-
 ‘ fore to be done.*

Reply. Peter doth not here say, *what thy Hand
 and thy Counsel determined from Eternity to be done :*
 Therefore this will not prove it, (for that was
 the Subject my Queries were grounded upon) nei-
 ther will any other Text of Scripture; and I sup-
 pose he will not presume to say, it was Revealed
 to him; and his bare Say-so, is no Proof: There-
 fore let it rest upon him as a Falsity. For no-
 thing can be believed, that contradicts the Justice,
 Mercy, Love, Holiness, Truth, and Purity of God,
 who is Equal in all his Ways; whose Mercy is
 more extended to Mankind, than to punish them
 for that which they could no way avoid. And if
 God decreed it, as my Opponent doth positively
 affirm, in the 30th Page of his Book, viz. *God
 from all Eternity did freely and unchangeably Ordain
 whatsoever comes to pass :* (Here’s not a word of
permit.) How could it be otherwise? I suppose he
 has placed the word *Permit* here, to soften it:
 But the vast difference of the Words will not suf-
 fer a Coherence. For if it be decreed, it is al-
 ready done; and it would be Nonsense to give
 Leave for the doing of a thing, that is already
 done, which the word, *Permit*, doth imply.

So, *Reader*, take notice how, by this Doctrine,
 God is presented as Author of *Adam’s Sin*; and
 not only so, but all the Sin that issued from it.
 And also, as if these Absurdities were not enough
 in this Answer, he proceeds farther, contradict-
 ing himself, as he hath before done, and saith,
 ‘ Hence ’tis manifest, that Christ’s Crucifixion was
 ‘ the Accomplishment of God’s Determination,
 ‘ his Counsel determined this to be done. And
 then,

then, as if he had gained the Point that he brings from the same Text of Scripture, which (as I have said before) does not prove it, he Paraphrases upon it thus: ' Now if God decreed the Death of his ' Son, to satisfy for Man's Sin; then he decreed ' to permit Man to fall into that Condition, in ' which he should need that Satisfaction: For God ' would not appoint his Son to become a needless ' Sacrifice.

Reply. From things deny'd, nothing can be infer'd that's inclusive, which these are; For Two Reasons, viz. First, Nothing can be believed, that contradicts the Justice, Mercy, Love, Truth, and Purity of God. Secondly, Neither will the Scripture afford him any Proof. And thus saying, doth contradict all the Attributes we can give to God, that he hath decreed to permit Adam's Sin, and all the Sin that issued from it: Therefore do deny the Position. For if God had from Eternity decreed, that Man should sin, he would not have given him such a positive Command, as in Gen. 2. 16, 17. viz. *And the Lord God commanded the Man, saying, Of every Tree of the Garden mayest thou freely eat: But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it: For in the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* God here declares his Mind to Adam, what he might do, and what he must not do, and what would follow if he disobeyed God's Command: All which implies, God did not decree Adam's Sin; and how much less all the Sin that issued from it? And whilst Man abode in that State of Innocence, in which God created him, and obeyed his Command, he was in Favour with God in Paradise; and such was the Rejoycing, and the Pleasantness of this Harmony, that *the Morning Stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for Joy, Job 38. 7.*

All was very good ; God was satisfied with all the Works of his Hands : And how much more Man, whom he created in his own Image, the noblest part of his Creation ? This was before Sin entred, or Death had dominion ; and where there was no Sin, there was no need of a Sacrifice for Sin : But after Man had sinned, God in great Compassion to the Sons and Daughters of Men, found out a way to restore fallen Man unto favour with God again. Now Christ Jesus is promised by the Name of the *Seed of the Woman*, that should bruise the Serpent's Head, to satisfy Divine Justice for the Sins of Mankind, &c.

He would wind himself off, with saying, ' Sin followeth not the Decree by necessity of Coaction or Compulsion ; for God's Decree puts no Constraint on Man's Will : Man sins as freely, as if there were no Decree ; and therefore God's Decree is not the Cause of Sin, but the Antecedent ; and Sin is not the Effect of the Decree, but the Consequent.

Reply. His fallacious Syllogism will not hold : If Sin be the Consequent, which he hath positively affirmed ; then, will it not necessarily follow, that the Decree is the Cause of Sin ? Which gives a Contradiction to his whole Undertaking.

His Answer to Query 2. is, Page 59. ' If you mean, by a *Day of Visitation*, that God afforded to *Cain* the Means of Salvation, and a Natural Capacity to make use of those in order to his Salvation, 'tis easily granted, he had this Day of Visitation.

Reply. It was so meant : In this we do agree. Here again he hath given away his Cause.

But the next Sentence is, ' If you mean to insinuate, that God loved *Cain* as well as *Abel*, and that

‘ that *Abel* made himself better than his Brother,
 ‘ or that *Cain* had such a Visitation as his Brother
 ‘ *Abel* had; this I deny. *Cain* was of that Wicked
 ‘ One, and had not that Grace from God which
 ‘ *Abel* had.

Reply. How doth he again contradict himself,
 in what he hath above said, that *Cain* had a Day
 of Visitation, and God afforded him the Means
 of Salvation.

Again, he saith, ‘ As to *Cain*’s Conditional Ac-
 ‘ ceptance, we grant that’s imply’d in the Scrip-
 ‘ ture quoted, if *Cain* did well, God would ac-
 ‘ cept him. (What follows upon this?) ‘ Will you
 ‘ infer from it, that *Cain* had the Grace of God
 ‘ in him, to enable him to do well? How absurd
 ‘ would such an Inference be?

Reply. Wherefore had *Cain* a Day of Visitation
 given him, wherein God afforded to him the
 Means of Salvation, and a mutual Capacity to
 make use of these in order to Salvation, as he
 hath already granted he had, if it was not to
 enable him to do well, and obtain acceptance with
 God? And yet saith, *How absurd would such an*
Inference be? When the Apostle saith, *The Grace*
of God, which brings Salvation, hath appeared to all
Men, &c. And that which brings Salvation, is
 the Means of Salvation: There Grace is this
 Means, &c. And therefore *Cain* had the Grace
 of God in him, to enable him to do well.

So, *Reader*, Take notice, he calls that *absurd*,
 which is agreeable to the Words of the Apostle,
 as I have already proved. But he himself is guil-
 ty of Absurdities, Self-Contradictions, and Con-
 fusion. And,

He farther saith, ‘ May not God promise any
 ‘ one Acceptance, if they do well, and not be
 ‘ obliged to give them Ability, which he owes

‘to none? *And again,* ‘May not God punish Man
‘justly for his Deficiency, seeing he had Power,
‘and voluntarily parted with it?

Reply. It is contrary to the Nature of the Almighty God, who is said to be *Love*, to require that of Man, he gives not Power to perform And again, We are not charging God with Injustice, for punishing Man for his Deficiency; seeing he acknowledgeth, *he had Power, and voluntarily parted with it*: For he could not voluntarily part with that he never had. One might think, if he were but half-sighted, he might see the Confusion he heaps up together. But I am doubtful, he is like those of whom our Lord spoke, *If the Blind lead the Blind, shall not both fall into the Ditch?*

I shall not trouble the Reader with any more of his Confused Impertinent Stuff, in this Answer; but proceed to another.

In Answer to Query 3. he saith, Page 60. ‘*Eſau*
‘was rejected by an Eternal Absolute Decree before he sold his Birth-Right.

Reply. But the whole Bible will not produce him one Proof; and he’s very positive in his Assertion, and will expound to us what the Apostle means: But unless he proves it, he may as well be silent; except to such, as in his *Epistle*, he presents with these Flattering Titles, *viz. I bless God I have found you a Teachable People, &c.*

He farther saith, ‘The Querist useth many
‘Words, and struggles hard against plain Text
‘and Scriptures, to make *Eſau* equal in God’s respect with *Jacob*.

Reply. I shall appeal to every Judicious Reader, whether there be such Words in my *Query*; and whether there be not plain Scripture to prove what I have said in that Query, with the rest.

And

And he saith, first, 'Here is a Text brought to prove, that *Esau* reprobated himself, by selling his Birth right, *Heb. 12. 17.* For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected: he found no place of Repentance, though he sought it Carefully, and with Tears.

Reply. Here he seems to Cavil at the plain Words of the Apostle, as if he knew better what it meant, than the Apostle himself, who plainly saith *afterward*, but my Opponent saith *before*, by an *Eternal Absolute Decree*. But I shall take the Apostle's Words for Truth, who understood the Mind of God better than this Author, and leave him to his groundless Positions.

Farther, he saith, 'Now from this very Scripture, that's brought to prove *Esau's* Rejection to be in time for his Sin, we may understand it to be from Eternity, according to God's purpose.

Reply. It cannot be understood by that Scripture: For the Apostle doth not say, it was from Eternity; neither can it be gathered from his Words, which are; First, *Look diligently, lest any Man fail of the Grace of God.* Secondly, *Lest any Root of Bitterness springing up, trouble you, and many be defiled.* Thirdly, *Lest there be any Fornicator, or Profane Person, as Esau, who for one morsel of Meat, sold his Birth-right: For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the Blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of Repentance, though he sought it carefully and with tears.* All which do imply, he was not rejected by an *Eternal Decree*, as we may understand by the foregoing Text of Scripture, where he lays the stress of *Esau's* being rejected. But I shall have occasion to handle this Point more fully hereafter; and shall now take notice of what he says concerning Pharaoh.

He

He saith, 'The true Sense of the Text is, that
'God created *Pharaoh* with a purpose to permit
'him to deal proudly, and oppressingly; that so
'God's Power might be more conspicuous, in
'shewing himself above him.

Reply. We may not suppose, that he was created
on purpose to deal so proudly and oppressingly:
For the *Hebrew* hath it, (instead of *Raising up*) *I*
have made thee stand; which implies, it was not
from Eternity: He could not be made to stand from
thence, nor yet from his being Created; for there
was nothing said, of *Raising him up to shew his Power*
in him, till after he was a cruel Oppressor of God's
People: How then was it Antecedent to his Op-
pression, being there were Seven Plagues of *E-*
gypt poured forth? So, undoubtedly, God in his
Justice might sooner have cut *Pharaoh* off; yet
the Lord was pleased to defer his Punishment,
that his Name might be declared throughout the Earth.
And it's no Abuse of the Text, that *Pharaoh's*
Oppression was the Cause, that (as the *Hebrew*
hath it) he was made to stand: For that very
Speech, in Contempt of the Lord (which I men-
tioned in my Query) *Who is the Lord, that I should*
obey his Voice, to let Israel go? I know not the Lord,
neither will I let Israel go; was enough to cause
the Lord to harden *Pharaoh's Heart*: For it was
said, *I will harden Pharaoh's Heart*; which implies,
it was not yet done. But God said, after all this,
For this Cause have I raised thee up; as if he had
said, as a Monument of my Displeasure. And this
was not antecedent to his Oppression, but the
Cause was given before, in increasing the Burthens
of God's People, when God sent his Servant, *Mo-*
ses and *Aaron*, to speak unto *Pharaoh*, who deli-
vered their Message unto him; but being hard-
ned by his Magicians, he persisted in his Tyran-
ny.

ny and Oppression; till his Servants, his Courtiers saw beyond him, and said, *Knowest thou not yet, that Egypt is destroyed? Let the Men go, that they may serve their God.* All which do imply, the Lord might justly have cut him off long before this.

In Answer to Query 4. he saith, Page 63. 'I suppose the Meaning of this Query is, whether God destroyed *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, for their Sins, or because they were Reprobates? Or whether their Sin, or the Decree was the Cause of their Punishment? I answer, God destroyed them for their Sin; for which they justly deserved that terrible Overthrow. Now if this be your mind, we are agreed.

Reply. Here he hath given away the Cause, and seemingly agrees with us: But presently contradicts himself, and charges it upon God, saying,

'If these *Sodomites* had been Subjects of God's special Grace, pursuant of his Gracious Purpose, they should not have become such Monsters in Sin, nor suffer'd such an Overthrow in this World, and the Vengeance of Eternal Fire in another.

Reply. He doth not here give the Reason, but I have heard him say to this, *it was, because it was decreed from Eternity.* How, by this Doctrine, is God render'd as the occasion of that monstrous Sin? By denying them to be Subjects of his Special Grace, which he brings no Proof for.

He farther adds, 'Here is a Discourse in this Query, I know not to what purpose, about *Abraham's* interceding with God for *Sodom*; and it seems to be insinuated, as tho' God had been undetermined what to do with *Sodom*, because he condescends to spare it, &c.

Reply. By his *Epistle* to his Book, it seems to be insinuated, that the Lord was undetermined concerning

cerning his Recovery, which he directs thus : *To my Beloved, that attend upon my Ministry at Cocker-mouth, &c.* And farther, 'When the Lord visited me with Sickness, at considerable distance from you, I had respective Visits from many that were capable of Journeying, and the joynt Prayers of all ; and I look upon my unexpected Recovery, as the Return of your Prayers. Thus far *J. A.* so believing, does overturn his whole Work. This Discourse of his, is of the same Nature ; and as if God was undetermined about his Recovery, till the Prayers of his Beloved People availed, And if he can tell what to make of his own Discourse concerning *Cain*, with many more Words, not to the purpose, which I shall not trouble the Reader with.

His Answer to Query 5. Page 64. 'God may give his People Conditional Acceptance very constantly with Predestination. For is't not agreeable to the Evangelical Dispensation, to promise Eternal Life to all that Believe ? And who can say, this Conditional Offer obliges God to give the Grace of Faith to all that have these Gospel Tenders ?

Reply. The Apostle saith, *The Grace of God, that brings Salvation, hath appear'd to all Men :* And that which brings Salvation, brings Faith ; for without Faith, it is impossible to please God, or attain to Salvation. And also the same Apostle saith, *He hath dealt to every one a measure of Faith :* Therefore Grace and Faith is offered to all. But if the Teaching of Grace be not adher'd to, and so Faith made shipwreck of ; who is in the fault ? God hath given that which is sufficient to save : Therefore it may justly be said, *Man's Destruction is of himself ; but in God is his Help.*

He

He farther saith, ' God gives Eternal Life, on Condition of Believing, to all under a Gospel-Dispensation; but he gives not the Ability to perform the Condition to all: For all Men have not Faith.

Ans. I have in the foregoing Reply, given the Reason why all Men have not Faith: But must confess, I admire my Opponent hath so much Impudence, so to charge it upon God, that he gives not Ability to all to perform what he requires of them. Hath he forgot what he said in Answer to Query 2. which I have before Repl'd to, viz. ' And may not God justly punish Man for his Deficiency, seeing he had Power, and voluntarily parted with it? And if Man had Power, it is God doth give it: For, saith the *Psalmist*, *Once have I heard, yea, twice; all Power belongs to God.* But now contradicts that, and saith, God gives not the Ability to perform. Pray, *Reader*, take notice how inconsistent he is with himself; as if he had forgot what he said in Answer to Query 2.

He saith, ' Now, tho' the Quakers call Conditional Acceptance, thus distinguished, Dissimulation; yet God in his own time will clear himself from their Blasphemous Aspersions.

Reply. It's he, and not us, that casts Blasphemous Aspersions on God, that saith *he ordains Sin*; as in Page 67. of his Book, he hath positively asserted concerning *Korah, Dathan and Abiram*, whose Sins were so Presumptuous in God's sight, that he caused the Earth to open her Mouth, and swallow them up. How Calumnious is it to Charge upon God, that which was an Abhorrence to him, and provoked him to that degree, that he caused the Earth so to swallow them up, as is before mentioned? What can the Impartial, Unprejudiced, think of such Doctrine? So unjustly to charge God,

God, it is quite beyond the Bounds of Truth and Justice. Now it's plain, 'tis he, not we, that blasphemously charge God.

Q. The faith, 'And may not God offer his Son and Kingdom on his own Terms, and yet be at his Liberty to give the Ability for performing the Condition to, and with-hold it from whom he pleaseth? And if you say, why doth God offer Salvation to those that he knows cannot accept it? 1. That he may deal with the Rational Creature in a Rational Way.

Reply. Is it Rational to offer that he knows Man cannot accept of? If we should speak after the manner of Men: Suppose a Poor Man asks Alms at a Rich Man's Door, and the Master of the House points to him, to come in at such a Door, and all his Wants shall be made up to him, and that he shall have all his Heart can desire: And the Poor Man, glad of such an Offer, makes haste to get to the Door; but when he comes there, he finds the Door so fast bolted, that he cannot get in, if he should there starve to Death; all the means he can use, is impossible; and they tell him, this Door he must come in at was bolted on this manner, before he had this Condition offered to him: And that which yet makes it more grievous, he tells the Man, It is his own fault; when he cannot come in, altho' he be desirous, the Door being bolted before; and yet he is blamed for not coming, as if the Door stood open. Would not this render the Rich Man (not only a Mocker of the Poor Man, but also) Bowelleless and Mercilefs? So, by their Doctrine, do they render Almighty God, who is full of Bowels, full of Mercy, and abundant in Goodness; as may be seen concerning Ephraim: The Prophet spoke in the Name of the Lord thus, *Is Ephraim my dear Son? Is he a pleasant Child?*

Child? For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; my Bowels are troubled for him. I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord. Notwithstanding God's great Love and Bowels to them, yet they revolted from the Lord, who by his Prophet takes up many Complaints, as, O Ephraim! what shall I do unto thee? O Judah! Your Goodness is as the Morning Cloud, and as the Early Dew, it passeth away. O Ephraim! Thou committedst Whoredom: Therefore have I hewed them by the Prophets, and slain them by the Words of my Mouth: With many more Complaints, which would be too tedious to mention; which signifies the exceeding Love of God to Mankind, in giving them a Day of Visitation, wherein God strives with them, in order to reclaim them from Wickedness. But when the Lord ceaseth to strive by his Holy Spirit, then People are let alone; as at length it was said to Ephraim, He is joyned to Idols, let him alone; but the long Patience, Bowels and Compassion of the Lord was manifested to them, as was well observed by the Apostle, who saith, The long-suffering of God waited in the Days of Noah, while the Ark was preparing; which was long. How then can such Doctrine be believed, as contradicts the Bowels, the Long-suffering, Compassion, the Justice, Mercy and Holiness of God; and limit his Goodness and Mercy to a very few, and withholding the Possibility of the Means of Salvation from the greatest part of Mankind, and that by an absolute Decree from Eternity? as our Adversary holds forth in many of his Answers, and in effect in his following Words, which are:

‘ Those to whom he will not give this Power
 ‘ to believe, may be inexcusable; for their cannot,
 ‘ is also a will not; and they freely refuse what God
 ‘ freely offers; and therefore are as chargeable for
 ‘ their

' their own Sin, as if God had never decreed any thing about 'em.

Reply. By which he would make it appear, that God decreed that they should not have Power to Believe; and yet saith, *They freely refuse what God freely offers*; granting Freedom of Will in all: But doth not tell us *what* God freely offers; but may suppose it is the means of Salvation, as he said concerning Cain; *not that they should be better for it, but inexcusable thereby.* But there can be no Connexion of these, but like Iron mixed with Clay: And I suppose he once had more Knowledge how to work Iron, than of the Work he has now undertaken; and he knows, till Iron hath both the Heat of the Fire to a good degree, and the Weight of the Hammer, it is not fit for the Use he inclined it for: No more is he for the Work of the Gospel, till he knows the Word of the Lord in his Heart, like a Fire, and like a Hammer; like a Fire, to burn away the Dross and the Canker, which sticks so fast upon him; and a Hammer, to break his hard Impenitent Heart; that so his Heart might thereby be made clean: For it is the clean Vessels are fit for such Uses. And if Men do not put new Wine into old Bottles; how much more will not God pour in of his new Wine into the old corrupt Heart, till it is made anew by the Power of his Son?

He farther saith, 'Now if you say, How can these things be?

Reply. It seems as if he thinks it would be look'd upon as a thing Incredible. But observe his Answer: 'So said *Nicodemus* to our Saviour about the New Birth. But I am not saying, *How can these things be?* I know these things are not so; there's no Truth in them: But Almighty God is Just and Equal, and doth not deal so Irrationally with

with Mankind ; it is contrary to his Nature, who is Immense Goodness and Love, beyond Demonstration.

This Author doth, in these Expressions, demonstrate himself to be a Carnal-minded Man, that discerns not the things of God, and hath need to make Application to Christ for his Eye-Salve, that he may see to the Saving of his Soul.

In Answer to that Query, concerning the Rebellious *Israelites*, He saith, ' The Blood of these wicked *Israelites*, that dealt Treacherously in God's Covenant, was upon their own Heads ; and that they had not the Benefit of the Covenant, was their own fault ; for God deny'd 'em nothing that was due to 'em.

Here he saith, *it was their own fault* : But before he saith, ' Punishment followeth not the Decree, as an Effect of it, but as the Fulfilling of it. But brings no Proof.

Reply. But if God had decreed from Eternity, (which never can be proved) that Men shall Sin ; is Man stronger than God, that he can alter it ? surely Nay, Man must submit to it ; how then, doth not Punishment follow the Decree, as an Effect of it ? He would wind himself off, from charging the Fault so heavily upon the Decree, but cannot : For, poor ignorant Man, he knows nothing of God's Decree, nor of those things he doth positively affirm, but what he knows naturally ; as the Apostle makes mention of some, that *knew nothing, but what they knew naturally, as brute Beasts* ; and with that Knowledge they corrupted themselves.

He saith moreover, ' God had his Elect among these People, and those he saved, and the rest perished in and for their Sin. (*But doth not prove it.*) ' The Elect obtained it, and the rest were blinded.

B

Reply.

Reply. Altho' the Apostle doth say, *The Election hath obtained, and the rest were blinded, or hardened;* for so it is in the Margent: Yet he doth not say, by God's absolute Decree from Eternity they were hardened, nor that their Fall should be Irrecoverable; but saith, *Have they stumbled, that they should fall? God forbid: But rather through their fall, Salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to Jealousie.* And why might not the Apostle speak for this End? that the Gentiles might not insult over the Jews, because some of the Branches were broken off; and tells them, *Because of Unbelief they were broken off, (meaning the Jews) and saith, Thou standest by Faith; be not high-minded, but fear: For if God spared not the Natural Branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the Goodness and Severity of God; on them which fell, Severity: But to thee Goodness, if thou continue in his Goodness, otherwise thou shalt also be cut off. And they also, if they abide not still in Unbelief, shall be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again.* From which it may be inferr'd, God's Love was still held forth to them, altho' for a time hardened; but if they continue not in Unbelief, they might be grafted in again. There's not a Syllable of their *Predestinarian Doctrine*, that they must still abide in Unbelief, or that God hath ordained it from Eternity, there's no altering of it. They may take home their Caution, for it belongs to them: Let them take heed, and beware, lest they be found fighting against God.

In his Answer to Query 6. he saith, Page 66.
 I will not say that these three Men you mention
 were appointed to Damnation; but they were
 appointed to this terrible and uncommon Death,
 that the Earth executed upon them.

Reply.

Reply. He doth not tell us when it was appointed; except he can prove it from Eternity, he doth not Answer punctually: But some answers, *It is*; and others, *And may it not be so?* Which is very impertinent, and in some decreed. Now he saith, 'God determin'd to leave 'em to 'that Rebellion, that they might justly fall under 'that Destruction. But doth not say, it was decreed from Eternity: Therefore the Query is unanswered.

He farther saith, 'Now, notwithstanding God's 'Pre-ordaining the Sin and Punishment of these 'Men, yet their own Sin was the Cause of their 'Suffering, and not God's Decree. The Decree 'is God's Act; and therefore 'tis foolish to ask, 'if God punish for the Decree.

Reply. He cannot prove that God pre-ordained the Sin of these Men; it is a notorious Falshood he charges upon God: Neither do any Scripture say their Punishment was pre-ordained, till after they gathered themselves together against *Moses* and *Aaron*, &c. But if it were true, that God pre-ordained their Sin, then it would necessarily follow, the cause of their Suffering was, because God pre-ordained their Sin. For if it was pre-ordained or decreed, what is Man, or his Power, that he could withstand God? Oh blush, and be ashamed! to blaspheme the Almighty God with pre-ordaining Sin, *who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity* with Approbation, much less to pre-ordain it.

He saith, 'Surely you are at a loss for want of 'Matter, that asks the same thing so often over.

Reply. No, I am not at all at a loss for want of Matter, but have much more than I can write. I would have him answer according to that the Scriptures hold concerning the Eternal Decree; and if their Doctrine of Absolute Reprobation

were according thereto, it might be easily done, and we should soon agree: But the very Tendence and Scope of the Scriptures goes against that Doctrine, from the Beginning of *Genesis*, unto the End of the *Revelations*, and will not produce him one Proof that God decreed from Eternity Man should Sin.

In Answer to Query 7. he saith, Page 67. '*Moses* speaks to a mix'd Multitude, and God had his Elect amongst them; and God gave power to those to chuse Life, &c. And as to the Reprobates, why may not God say to them, chuse you whether you will, Life or Death? If you say, he hath decreed the contrary; what then? The Decree of God is not the Cause of Man's obstinate refusing Christ, but his own unrenew'd Will is the Cause of their Refusal.

Reply. Observe, here's no Proof, but his bare Say-so, that God mocks the Reprobates, with saying unto them, *Chuse whether Life or Death*, when he has pre-ordained they shall not chuse Life. But till he proves it, let it rest upon him as a Falsity.

He farther saith, 'You would infer, I perceive, That if God put Men to their Choice, he's obliged to give 'em Ability to chuse Right. But this is your great Mistake, for 'tis God's ordinary way to put Sinners to their Choice in the general Tender of the Gospel, and to give some few Ability to make the best Choice. The Grace of God in the Gospel appears to all Men in the general Tender, but it *teacheth us*, saith the Apostle; *Many called, Few chosen*. The Elect are taught by the Gospel to deny *Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts*, and to live Soberly, &c.

Reply. The General Tender of the Gospel, is
God's

God's great Love to Mankind, which implies a Capacity given them to chuse Right: For the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all Men; and teacheth us, that denying Ungodliness, and Worldly Lusts, we should live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World, &c. And this proves not Insufficiency in the Grace of God, or that the greatest part of Mankind have not the Ability given them to chuse Right, but only some few. For, by his so Arguing, the Offer of Grace is to mock the greatest part of Mankind: But it is a notorious Falshood, by which they Reproach the Living God, who so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believed in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.

His Answer to Query 8. Page 68. 'The design
' of the Querist here, is to make God's threatning
' and punishing Men for their Sin, inconsistent
' with his appointing to permit their Sin.

Reply. He doth not say it was appointed from Eternity; and therefore the Queries are not Answered, neither first nor last. And for that, in Answer to Query 1. I have Reply'd to that already.

He saith, 'The Apostle foresaw your Query:
' He had been treating of Predestination, and concluding from it, that it was neither of him that wil-
' leth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that shew-
' eth Mercy.

Reply. We are of the Apostle's mind: We believe it is in God that sheweth Mercy; whose Mercy is said to be over all the Works of his Hands; and is so far extended to Mankind, whilst Sinners, that he hath assured us thereof, by the greatest of Certainties, viz. As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the

Wicked turn from his Way, and live. And that concerning Pharaoh, I have Answer'd before.

And as to that Saying, *'Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his Will? Is not this the same with your saying, That if Man's Sin and Punishment was absolutely decreed from Eternity, might it not rather be said, it was no Desert of theirs.*

Reply. No, it's not the same; for if it had been decreed from Eternity, it could not have been resisted; it must stand: Man is not stronger than God, that he can alter the Decree. But the Apostle Paul spoke some things hard to be understood, which the Apostle Peter, in his Second General Epistle, expresseth thus, viz. *Even as our beloved Brother Paul also, according to the Wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of those things: in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction, &c.* And this Author may take this home: For his many Self-Contradictions, Absurdities, and Unstability, doth imply him to be Unlearned in the *Mystery of God*; and therefore what the Apostle said, may justly be applicable to him: For he cannot rightly discern the *Things of God*, till he comes to that which opens, which is the *Spirit of God*; without which, the Apostle tells us, *no Man knows the things of God.* And what the Apostle said, is not at all applicable to that, viz. *If Man's Sin and Punishment was decreed from Eternity, might it not be said, it was no Desert of theirs?* because the Apostle saith no where, it was decreed from Eternity, either that Man should Sin, or that he should be punished; but the Apostle's Speech was, to let Man see what he was in God's Hand, and of the Power
God

God had over him, and what he could do, even as the Potter over the Clay. But it were Nonsense for us to conclude, that we could be marred in God's Hand; and also contradictory to that Scripture, where it is said, *God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* But there are great Varieties in God's Work, as the Apostle speaks concerning the Resurrection, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory.* So we are not to answer again, or dispute with God; for so it is in the Margent, *why answerest thou again, or disputest with God?* but to be content with the Station God hath placed us in, though less Honourable, as to that degree of Wisdom, than others; but if Faithful in that we have received, we shall have the Answer of *Well done*, as well as those that have received a greater Gift; as may be seen in the Parable concerning the Talents; and also as the Apostle said, *In a great House there are not only Vessels of Gold and of Silver, but also of Wood and of Earth, and some to Honour, and some to Dishonour; (and whilst clean, may all be Vessels for Use, some for one Service, and some for another.) If a Man therefore, said the Apostle, purge himself from these, (as if he had said from these things that would defile, as Sin and Iniquity are defiling) he shall be a Vessel of Honour sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good Work.* But for us to gather from the Apostle's Words, that in our first Creation God hath made any Man a Vessel of Dishonour, would contradict the Relation that was given after all the Creation was finished, which I have mentioned before, *viz. And God saw every thing that he had made, (observe how full it is spoken here, every thing) and behold it was very good.* So

Wicked turn from his Way, and live. And that concerning Pharaoh, I have Answer'd before.

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God had over him, and what he could do, even as the Potter over the Clay. But it were Nonsense for us to conclude, that we could be marred in God's Hand; and also contradictory to that Scripture, where it is said, *God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* But there are great Varieties in God's Work, as the Apostle speaks concerning the Resurrection, *There is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory.* So we are not to answer again, or dispute with God; for so it is in the Margent, *why answerest thou again, or disputest with God?* but to be content with the Station God hath placed us in, though less Honourable, as to that degree of Wisdom, than others; but if Faithful in that we have received, we shall have the Answer of *Well done*, as well as those that have received a greater Gift; as may be seen in the Parable concerning the Talents; and also as the Apostle said, *In a great House there are not only Vessels of Gold and of Silver, but also of Wood and of Earth, and some to Honour, and some to Dishonour; (and whilst clean, may all be Vessels for Use, some for one Service, and some for another.) If a Man therefore, said the Apostle, purge himself from these, (as if he had said from these things that would defile, as Sin and Iniquity are defiling) he shall be a Vessel of Honour sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good Work.* But for us to gather from the Apostle's Words, that in our first Creation God hath made any Man a Vessel of Dishonour, would contradict the Relation that was given after all the Creation was finished, which I have mentioned before, *viz. And God saw every thing that he had made, (observe how full it is spoken here, every thing) and behold it was very good.* So

to conclude, that God made any Man a Dishonourable Vessel, would be absurd and wicked : But, as the Apostle said, *He endured with much long-suffering the Vessels of Wrath fitted for Destruction* ; but doth not say, the Lord made them *Vessels of Wrath*, or *fitted them for Destruction* ; but *endured them with much Long-suffering*, being still ready to forbear the Execution of his Displeasure, if they would but turn from their Evil, before they were judicially hardened, and so fitted for Destruction. But as the Psalmist saith, *God is a Judge strong and patient, and is angry with the Wicked every day : If he turn not, he will whet his Sword ; he hath bent his Bow, and made it ready, &c. He hath also prepared for him the Instruments of Death, &c.* And also the Apostle speaks concerning the Punishment of such that despiseth *Moses's Law*, they died without Mercy under the Hands of Two or Three Witnesses : Of how much sorer Punishment shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the Blood of the Covenant, wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and have done despite to the Spirit of Grace ? It is such as are Vessels fitted to Dishonour and Wrath ; who, although the Goodness of God was manifested unto them, by enduring them long, yet they added Sin to Sin, till his long Patience was fulfilled ; as it is written, *Vengeance belongeth unto me, saith the Lord, I will recompence* : Wherein may be seen both the Goodness and Severity of God, as said the Apostle, *On them which fell, Severity ; but to thee, Goodness, if thou continue in his Goodness ; otherwise thou shalt also be cut off, Rom. 11. 22.*

In Answer to Query 9. he saith, Page 70. 'The Design of this Query is the same with the former, to intimate, that Predestination is inconsistent

‘ *sistent with Commands, Threatnings, Promises,*
 ‘ *and Punishments. For the Querist apprehends,*
 ‘ *that Joshua's Exhortation includes a Denial of*
 ‘ *Divine Determination. But consider, after Jo-*
 ‘ *shua had put the People to their Choice, and*
 ‘ *they had chosen Verbally to serve the Lord,*
 ‘ *yet he tells them, they could not serve the Lord;*
 ‘ *the People said, we will serve the Lord, he is our*
 ‘ *God; but Joshua said unto the People, ye cannot*
 ‘ *serve the Lord.*

Reply. Observe, he partially cites Joshua, leaving out the Reason *why* and *when* they could not serve the Lord; which was, if they served other Gods. But it was said, *These People did serve the Lord all the Days of Joshua, and the Days of the Elders that out-lived Joshua; whereby it may be understood, they both could and did serve the Lord.* By thus Insinuating, and Paraphrasing upon Part of Joshua's Words, he would give him the Lye: How may I expect fair Dealing, when he does so unfairly with Joshua? If we should do so by the Apostle, we should take his Words thus, *We know not what to pray for as we ought, (and leave out, but the Spirit it self maketh Intercession for us, with Groanings that cannot be uttered,)* we shall, by so doing, make him inconsistent with himself, where he saith, *I will that Men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath or doubting, &c.* Which is as much as to say, he wills Men to pray better than the Apostles themselves, or else it would be they know not what. What strange confused Work would such Inferences make, turning things *Topsie-turvy*?

He farther Paraphrases upon it, and saith,
 ‘ *How large soever Freewillers be in promising.*
 ‘ *Obedience, they will fail in their Performances,*
 ‘ *till they act from better Principles than their*
 ‘ *natural*

‘natural Powers, tho’ assisted with all the Universal Grace they boast of.

Reply. Can there be a better Grace, than that which brings Salvation? That must needs be granted, is saving: And what is more Universal, than that which appears to all Men? And is not that sufficient to assist our Natural Powers, that was sufficient for the Apostle, when there was given him a Thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan to buffet him; for which he besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from him; whose Answer was, *My Grace is sufficient for thee, &c.* And by Grace ye are saved, through Faith, and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God: This is the Universal Grace, the Apostle speaks of. Here’s not a word of Special Grace, neither do I remember such a Word in the whole Scripture. There cannot be a more Special Grace, than that which brings Salvation, which is Universal. This Author ought not to speak so Blasphemously of the Grace, and such as are assisted by it with Faith in their Performance of Obedience.

He farther saith, ‘Now compare Joshua in the Text you cite, with himself in what we quoted, and you’ll see, that after Joshua had threatened them with Destruction, if they did not adhere to the true God, and his Worship, and has the Peoples God forbid in abhorrence of the contrary Practice, he yet tells them they could not serve the Lord.

Reply. It is a great Abuse of the Text, to take a part of a Sentence, or Doctrine, and leave out that which would make it perfect: By so doing, this Author makes Joshua inconsistent with himself. Such Doings would soon turn all the best Exhortations into confused Nonsense, and (as I said before) turn all things Topsy-turvy. He hath already

already gone three times over *Joshua's* Words, and never given the Reason which *Joshua* gave. If he might but have had the Justice of his Words brought together, they would have explained the Text quite contrary to what this Author would insinuate concerning it.

And he will not let that serve, but we must have yet something more concerning it, viz. 'It is the Case of all, as well as theirs under *Joshua*, to be utterly unable to serve the Lord, till he work in 'em to will and to do of his good Pleasure. Now this good Pleasure denotes Electing Love; none can serve the Lord but the Elect, because they receive Special Grace for the purpose.

Reply. Which is, as tho' there were a Grace that were not for the purpose, which to say is Wicked and Blasphemous. Would they have a more Special Grace, peculiar to themselves, than that which the Apostle saith, *hath appeared to all Men, that brings Salvation?* Is there need for a Grace more Special? Surely no: Such as are not content with it, are too much of a Luciferian Spirit.

He saith, 'Now were these saved by the Lord, no more than others? Did these People make themselves to differ? Are they not called a chosen People?

Reply. We do not say, Man can make himself to differ; but, as the Apostle said, *By the Grace of God, I am what I am:* So we say, as People mind the Teachings of the Grace, to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World; it may be said unto them, *Who is like unto thee, O People, saved by the Lord?* Because it is by Grace what they are, and it is given them of God: For every good and perfect Gift comes from God; and therefore

fore well may it be said, such a People are saved by Him.

In his Answer to Query 10. he saith, Page 72. ' It was in the Power of these People to help their Brethren against their potent Enemy *Sifera*; ' and therefore were justly cursed for not doing ' that they might and ought to have done. But presently contradicts himself, and saith, ' I grant ' that these Men acted subordinately to the Decree of God, in not fighting the Lord's Battles.

Answ. Which doth imply it was decreed by God these Men should not help their Brethren, and yet bitterly cursed, and that by the Angel of the Lord, for acting subordinately to God's Decree, as this Author saith; which is a bold impudent Assertion (but no Proof) so absurdly and presumptuously to Reproach the most Holy, Pure and Merciful God, with such Injustice; with more confused Stuff, which is not worth taking notice of, but to let People see their Confusion and Error.

His Answer to Query 11. is, Page 73. ' The ' Doctrine of *Absolute Predestination* is far from intimating God's disregarding Mens Actions, &c. ' Those that God hath appointed to Salvation, ' he hath appointed and commanded them to live ' Soberly, Righteously, and Godly. And God hath ' purposed to accept of all their right Performances ' for Christ's sake; how then doth the Decree argue God's disregarding Mens Actions? And as ' to the Evil Actions of the Elect, God regards ' them, and will take Vengeance on their Inventions, but will not utterly desert their Persons.

Reply. The Reader may take notice, a little before he saith, ' Those that God hath appointed to ' Salvation, he hath appointed and commanded 'em

'em to live Soberly, and Righteously, and Godly. Surely he will not be so impudent to say, these are Evil Actions; and if they are appointed so to live, it is Contradiction to say, as to the Evil Actions of the Elect, unless he doth not account these for the Elect, but some other sort, who bring forth Evil Actions; then there should be two sorts of Elect, one to live Soberly, &c. and the other to bring forth Evil Actions. But the Apostle saith, *Doth the Fountain send forth at the same place sweet Water and bitter?* and as Christ saith, *Either make the Tree good, and his Fruit good; or the Tree corrupt, and his Fruit corrupt.*

And he saith, 'You need not question but God regards the Evil Actions of the Reprobates, and will reward them, according to their Works.

Reply. By such Doctrine, how do they render Almighty God a partial Judge, to reward the Reprobates only according to their Works, and for the Evil Actions of the Elect to take Vengeance on their Inventions, and not utterly to desert their Persons; in Contradiction to that Saying, *Behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give every Man according as his Work shall be?* Oh what Sin-pleasing Doctrine is this for those he calls the *Elect*! No wonder if they be puffed up with Pride and vain Conceit, supposing themselves to be the Elect; and with what Abhorrence they look upon their Fellow-Mortals, accounting them Reprobates, if they differ from them in Opinion, and to be so fore-ordained by God's Decree from Eternity; altho' neither *Old* nor *New Testament* will produce one Proof for them: For by this Doctrine he insinuates no manner of Sin in these, he accounts to be the Elect, to be rewarded according to their Works, but *God will take Vengeance on their Inventions, &c.* If he should say, It was

was so said concerning *Israel*, that God forgave them, and took Vengeance on their Inventions; it will make nothing for him. For, according to his own Argument, they were a mix'd Multitude, and could not, all of them whom he forgave, be accounted the Elect: Therefore such as he accounts the Reprobates, had the Benefit of the Forgiveness.

He saith, 'Tis also said in this Query, That 'this Doctrine of Election leads into a dissolute Life, void of all Fear, or down into Despair.

Reply. He wrongs the Querist and the Query: For *Election* is not mentioned in that place; neither the words, *Void of all Fear*. And tho' he saith, The Charge is altogether false; he cannot prove, that Christ and his Apostles taught as he doth, viz. 'That God from all Eternity absolutely decreed any Man for Destruction, without any Condition.

He saith, 'Now whether there was such a Man, or the Querist has feign'd it, I know not.

Reply. But I know there was such a Man, and that it was not feigned, but published with Regret upon his account; that others might be warned, and not drink in such a Doctrine as opens a Door to Licentiousness, and lets People loose to all manner of Lewdness. For if it be decreed from Eternity, that any Man is fore-ordained to Everlasting Death, who can alter it? He may vainly suggest, he may take his Swing in this Life, or else upon the occasion of desperate Sorrow sink down into Despair.

I may add another Instance concerning Despair. I had Acquaintance with one, who, with his Companion, frequented that Assembly, of which *J. A.* accounts himself a Minister, where such Doctrine was preached; the latter finding himself under
the

the Judgments of God for Sin, the Guilt of it being upon him; and from that Doctrine, believing himself to be one of the *Reprobates*, he, alas, went away and destroy'd his own Life: But his intimate Friend being exceeding Sorry, wrote to him who was then a Preacher, of the sad Effect that happen'd through his Doctrine. I suppose he was not willing that it should spread any farther, and therefore burnt the Letter.

But this Author saith, 'Consider Jesus Christ himself was a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence, to those blinded by the God of this World; but was Christ to be blamed for that?'

Reply. The Comparison is not Equal; it had been far more, to have compar'd your Preacher with Judas, to preach such Licentious Doctrine, than compare him with Christ. Oh Impudence and Presumption! But this Author may take his Comparison home: I am jealous, he is blinded by the God of this World; and Jesus Christ is to him, by the Appearance of his Grace, a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence; and for Lucre's sake (I'm doubtful) he teaches: And if it would be more advantage to him, I do not question but he would, according to the *Proverb*, *Turn his Cleek upon the other Shoulder.*

He saith, 'The contrary Doctrine is justly Chargeable of making Men either Presumptuous or Desperate. Mens Confidence of their own Power makes 'em Careless and Presumptuous, and keeps them from God.'

Reply. Whoever he means, I say, We teach no such Doctrine, as make People either Presumptuous or Desperate, or Confident of their own Power. I have several times before express'd, it's our Belief, *By Grace we are saved, and that not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God.*

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‘ He farther saith, ‘ And if once they come to
 ‘ see their own Weakness, and have no better
 ‘ Support than your General Doctrine affords,
 ‘ their Hearts must needs fail ’em; for you lie
 ‘ all upon Man; or however, you lie all upon what
 ‘ God hath done for all Men alike.

Reply. Both these Assertions are false, as I have
 several times expressed.

He saith, ‘ Now when Man finds he has nothing
 ‘ in him but what fails him; and your Doctrine
 ‘ forbids him to expect any thing from God, but
 ‘ what the worst of Men have; this Doctrine
 ‘ therefore will send the distressed Conscience to
 ‘ *Judas’s* Remedy, *Go hang thy self*, is all that can
 ‘ be look’d for from your General Point when a
 ‘ Storm riseth in the Conscience.

Observe, This Author would make the *Grace of*
God to fail Man in the needful time; when the
 Apostle said, *By Grace ye are saved, through Faith,*
and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.
 And as it’s manifest, God’s Love to Mankind is
 such, that *the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation*
hath appeared to all Men; so that the worst of Men,
 by taking heed to the Teaching thereof, might be
 Reclaimed thereby from Iniquity; Should the
Grace be slighted and undervalued? (because it is
 the good Pleasure of the Almighty, *who delights*
not in the Death of the Wicked, but rather they would
turn from their Wickedness, and live; and gives to
 all the Proffer of *Grace*,) this would look like
 an over-valuing of our Selves, and despising our
 Fellow-Mortals. Was the Ministry the Apostles
 received to be slighted, because *Judas* received a
 part thereof, and by Transgression fell from it?
 Most certain it is, this Author is got to a great
 degree of Presumption, that dare speak so slight-
 ingly of the *Grace of God*, which the Apostle saith,
 brings

brings Salvation; for that's the General Point he derides so much: For what is more General, than that which appears to all Men? But the Grace of God, which brings Salvation, hath appeared to all Men: Therefore the Grace of God, that brings Salvation, is this General Doctrine, which this Author Blasphemously saith, will send the distressed Conscience to Judas's Remedy, Go hang thy self. But he's like a Man benighted, and has Darkness for his Companion: For he that walks in Darkness, knows not whether he goes; no more doth he, to speak so despihtfully of that Grace, which brings Salvation, which was sufficient for Paul in the greatest of Exercises, and to which he commended the Elders of Ephesus, in these words, And now, Brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them which are sanctified. This is beyond Judas's Remedy, &c.

He saith, 'We have God's Will that shall be done, and his Counsel that shall stand to depend upon; but you have only the frail, fickle, fallen Will of Man to depend upon, and to boast of.'

Reply. It is a false Aspersion cast upon us, which he cannot prove. He sets himself in the Seat of Judgment, as if he knew we had forfeited our Interest in God and Christ; otherwise we have as much to depend upon as they. And be it known unto him, we neither depend upon, nor boast of, the frail, fickle, fallen Will of Man: But what we are, it is by the Grace of God.

He saith, 'You ask, If the Minister that preached this Doctrine did not some way occasion the poor Man's Dissoluteness? Ans. He did some way occasion it, just as our Saviour occasion'd Contentions and Divisions by his Coming.'

Reply. There cannot be a greater Contrariety.

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Christ never occasion'd Contention and Divisions, by preaching such Licentious Doctrine: His Doctrine always was to guard against all manner of Licentiousness; and in short, every thing which would obstruct Man's Well-being in another World.

It is not Equal, that he should be compared just as our Saviour: He might have given our Saviour some Preference above such a Libertine. It is more like *Judas*, who betray'd his Master. And I am doubtful, this Preacher occasioned this poor Man's Doom, by strengthening his Hands in Wickedness with such Sin-pleasing Doctrine; for so it is to the Loose and Prophane; and those that are more fearful, doth drive them down into Despair.

In Answer to Query 12. he saith, Page 75.
 ' This Doctrine of Absolute Reprobation is not
 ' contrary to the Message of the Man of God;
 ' for whoever honours God, God will honour him.
 ' Had *Eli's* Sons honour'd God, they should have
 ' had Honour from him.

Reply. But if, according to your *Confession of Faith*, God from all Eternity freely and unchangeably ordains whatever comes to pass; and it came to pass, that *Eli's* Sons were wicked, and Sons of *Belial*, and knew not the Lord: Therefore, according to your *Confession of Faith*, God ordained the Sons of *Ely* to be wicked Men, and Sons of *Belial*, and should not know the Lord, nor Honour him. Which Doctrine is contrary to the Message of the Man of God, who said, *The Lord God of Israel saith; I said indeed, that thy House and the House of thy Father should walk before me for ever: But now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for they that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* Whereby it may be understood,

understood, God had a great regard to Eli's House, till they provoked him with their Iniquity : For it is said, *The Sin of the young Men was very great before the Lord*; and although the Lord said to Eli, *That his House, and the House of his Father, should walk before him for ever*; but now it was far from him. Which answers to that Saying in Jer. 18. 7. *At what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it: If that Nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their Evil, I will repent of the Evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to build and to plant it: If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my Voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I thought to benefit them*: Which is an absolute Contradiction to Predestinarian Doctrine.

In Answer to Query 13. he saith, Page 76. *' David is speaking of what God had done for him in Time, and not of God's Purpose from Eternity.*

Reply. I do not remember that David, in any of his Writings, doth speak of God's Purpose from Eternity; although I believe, he knew more of God's Mind than this Author; being a Man God found after his own Heart, saving in the Matter of Uriah. David spoke of such things as were Revealed to him, and his Experience of the Goodness of God, saying, *Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean Heart: Who gave many good Admonitions, some of which are as followeth; Serve the Lord with Fear, Rejoyce with Trembling; Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the Way, when his Wrath is kindled but a little: Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*

From which it may be inferred, there is a Day of Visitation given to the Sons and Daughters of Men, wherein they may *serve the Lord with Fear, and rejoyce with Trembling*; and as the Prophet said, *They shall Hear and Tremble, for all the Goodness I shall procure unto them.* These that do imbrace the Son of God in the way of his Reproofs, and turn thereat, he hath promised in the Name of *Wisdom*, to *pour forth his Spirit upon them, and make known his Words unto them*; which will help them to do all things that he requires of them, according to the Apostle, *The Spirit helps our Infirmities*; and he will make known his Words unto them; for the Way of Reproof, is the Way of Life: By which Spirit and Life, they receive Power over their own Hearts Lusts, and know measureably an overcoming of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; and their Trust and Confidence is in God, and their Faith stands in his Power, and their daily Care is to wait for it; knowing, of themselves they can do nothing; but all Power is committed to the Son of God; and such as Receive him, to them he gives Power to become the Sons and Daughters of God, even to as many as Believe in his Name: So that *Man's Destruction is of himself*, according as the Prophet spoke concerning Israel, *but their Help is in God.* Which is quite opposite to that Predestinarian Doctrine, that God should create the far greater part of Mankind for Destruction; for that is contrary to his Nature, which is Love.

And farther he saith, *'David's Conformity to God constituted him a Righteous Man; and it was right with God to Reward him according to his Righteousness. God will Reward every Man according to his Works: To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for Glory, Honour, and Immortality, God will give 'em Eternal*

‘ *Eternal Life : But to them that are Contentious, and*
 ‘ *do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness ; In-*
 ‘ *dignation and Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish, upon*
 ‘ *every Soul of Man that doth Evil, of the Jew first,*
 ‘ *and also of the Gentile, Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9.*

Reply. In which Sentence of Scripture I agree, and am of the same mind, that God will Reward every Man according as his Work shall be ; that Proof he has brought, is a positive Confirmation of it. But this Author has either forgot what he said in Answer to Query 11. or changed his Opinion, (I should be glad, if the latter) for there he saith, ‘ As to the Evil Actions of the Elect, God regards them, and will take Vengeance on their ‘ Inventions, and will not utterly desert their Persons ; and you need not question, but God regards the Evil Actions of the Reprobates, and ‘ will Reward them according to their Works. Whereby he contradicts both Himself, and the plain Text he brought to prove it. From whence, may it not be inferred ? it is themselves have only the frail, fickle, fallen Will of Man to depend on, and boast of ; for God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace in all the Churches.

In Answer to Query 14. he saith, Page 77. ‘ This is the same with Query 2. about Cain’s ‘ Conditional Acceptance. However, *David’s Ex-* ‘ *hortation to Solomon is very agreeable to Pre-* ‘ *destination ; (but does not prove it by Scripture ;)* ‘ for God blest Exhortations to the Elect, to ‘ effect in them what he hath purposed to bestow ‘ upon ’em ; and therefore Exhortations to such, ‘ are the Fruits of Election. And God exhorts ‘ the Reprobates to Obedience, and it is their ‘ Duty to obey. If you say, Why should they ‘ be Exhorted, if they want Ability to obey ?

Ans. 1. It seems good to God to exhort all Men in general, that are within the compass of the Gospel; and the Will of God is Reason enough for any of his Work.

Repy. Thus Arguing would render God Partial in his Blessing, and Unreasonable in his Commands; to Command, and yet give no Ability to perform; and to say, *The Will of God is Reason enough*, and according to the Doctrine of Predestination, it must be ordained from Eternity, before they could provoke the Lord by sinning; and that God should for the Glory of his Sovereign Power over his Creatures, to pass by and to ordain them to Dishonour and Wrath, &c. make Blessings, and Exhortations, and Commands, either Fruitless, or worse, on purpose to aggravate their Sin. These things cannot, nor ought to be believed, because they contradict the clearest Ideas we have from Scripture of the Justice, Holiness, Mercy, Love, Truth, and Purity of God.

He saith, 2. 'God exhorts the Non-elect, because he has Power: They have lost their Power to obey him, but God has not lost his Power to command them. 3. God may exhort those he will not save, to restrain 'em; for they may have Restraining Grace, tho' they never have Renewing Grace. 4. God may exhort and command these Men, to aggravate their Sin.

Observe, Here is not one word of Proof in all this Heap of Confusion. He saith, *The Non-elect have Power to Obey*: It is Nonsense to tell of losing that they never had; and if their Destruction was decreed from Eternity, according to their Doctrine, they never had Power; and if ever they had Power, this makes against their Doctrine: Therefore Confusion at best. And how does he prove they may have Restraining Grace, and not
Renewing

Renewing Grace? The Scripture is silent concerning Distinction of *Grace*, either Restraining or Special. The Apostle only tells of that *Grace* that brings *Salvation*, which he saith appeared to all Men; and *Jude* writes of the common *Salvation*. Therefore let him prove where there's mention of any other *Grace*; or let it rest as meer Imaginary Notions, they are run into, not Scriptural.

He saith, 'God may Exhort and Command these Men to Aggravate their Sin.

Reply. Such Doctrine renders God more Severe and Irrational than most Men. What Rational Man would command his Servant, or say on this wise to him, Go hew down such a Tree (as he lets him see,) and tells him he must do it, or else he will punish him, without Mercy; but before he can come there, where this Work must be done, his Master binds him at such a distance from this Tree, as that he cannot reach it, and with such a strong Chain, as he can by no means break; neither allow him an Ax, nor any other Instrument, to hew it down with; and though he doth command him again and again to do it, how does it make this Servant, in any Rational Man's sight, more worthy of Punishment, only because his Master commanded him, seeing all the while it was still alike impossible? How, by this Doctrine, doth he render the Almighty and Merciful God (whose Ways are Equal) more Unequal than most Men, &c. With more of the same Tendency. For,

He saith, 'Men of the General Principle, are generally Loose.

Reply. So saying, Reflects on better Men than himself. For the Apostle *Paul* was of this General Principle; and *Titus* was of this General Principle, whom *Paul* calls, *my own Son after the com-*

mon Faith; and *Jude* also, who gave all diligence to write of the *common Salvation*. While he Reflects on us for Looseness, I am doubtful, he hath forgot that he Reflects on these before-mentioned, which I would hope he will give the Preference to.

He saith, 'You farther Query, If the Lord doth not promise all upon Conditions? *Ans.* What then? it doth not therefore follow, that Man hath the Power in himself to perform the Condition. God hath promised to work the Conditions in the Elect that he requires of them, to will and to do of his good Pleasure; and God may require the Performance of such Conditions from Reprobates, tho' he is not obliged to give 'em Power.

Reply. Which Doctrine does, with the Unprofitable Servant, render God an *hard Master*, and ought not to be believed.

'However, *he saith*, the Fault cannot lie on God's side; for God may do what he will with his own. *God is the Lord*; and what if he will leave some Men and Angels to their own Management, and punish them for their ill Management, who dare reply against God? *Has not the Potter power over the Clay?* &c.

Reply. God is a God of Equity, and all his Ways are Equal, and all his Judgments according thereto. But this Doctrine renders God Unequal and Unjust, in punishing Men for not doing that he never gave them Power to do: Which their Carnal Notions and Imaginary Conceit may be taken for a Replying against God, as if he were a God of Injustice, and Unequal in all his Ways. But it is said, *With Righteousness he shall Judge the World, and the People with Equity*; and nothing ought to be believed against it. And that concerning the *Potter*, I have answer'd before. In

In Answer to Query 15. he saith, Page 79. 'In this Query you make a terrible Monster, and then a lamentable Outcry to be delivered from it. But why should you fear a Brat of your own Brain? Tho' you Father it upon the Doctrine of Predestination, as tho' it were deducible from it.

Reply. It cannot be render'd so Terrible as is deducible from this Doctrine of Absolute Predestination. But why doth he say a *Monster*? It is such as maintain this Monstrous Doctrine do account it so, and a Brat of my own Brain; but 'tis neither.

But the Expressions of good old *Jacob* concerning his Sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, are, *Cursed be their Wrath, for it was cruel; for in their Wrath they slew a Man, and in their Self-will they digged down a Wall.* And if *Jacob* had cause thus to take up a Complaint, much more have we concerning this Doctrine, which (I am Jealous) have destroyed many hundred times more than ever did the Swords of *Simeon* and *Levi*.

He saith, 'The *Quakers* do by the Doctrine of Predestination, as the *Heathens* did by the Primitive Christians, who put on the Christians the Skins of wild Beasts, and then tore them with Dogs. So these Men put their own Abominable Inferences upon Absolute Predestination, and then say, O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret.

Reply. His Comparison hath no Equality in it. I speak nothing concerning it, but what is deducible from it, and agreeable to the Scripture. I would not have him blame the Men, except he will Reproach him who first spoke it: 'Tis but a Woman he hath to Answer, and therefore if he should

should gain a Victory, it would not tend much to his Reputation: And if that which is deducible from it, and that which is according to Scripture, do render it detestable, it is high time to consider how you will give an Account before the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, for maintaining such Doctrine as my Opponent hath said concerning God, (*viz.* that he pre-ordains Sin,) of whom it was testified, *He was of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*; that being the only Cause of the Separation of Man from God.

And for his Comparison, he may take it home, and not go to the *Heathens*. For those People, that hold that Doctrine of *Absolute Predestination*, who fled out of *Old-England* for fear of Persecution, after they came into *New-England* themselves (not another Generation) became cruel Persecutors, in cruel Whippings and Scourgings, Bonds and Imprisonments, Beatings and Chainings, Starvings and Fines, Confiscation of Estates, Burning in the Hand, Cutting off Ears, Orders of Sale for Bond-men and Bond-women, Banishment upon Pain of Death; and lastly, putting to Death four of our Friends, whom they hanged; and others lay in Irons, ready for Execution, but that a *Mandamus* was sent from the King of *England*, which did put a stop to their Bloody Laws and Proceedings against them: All which was only upon the account of their Consciences. There was no Matter of Fact proved against them, but that they returned to *Boston* again, after they were Banished upon Pain of Death. And they taken to Prison, and brought before their Governour, *John Endicot*, and the Sentence of Death pronounced against them. And on the 27th of the 8th Month, 1659. they caused the Drums to beat, to gather the Soldiers together for the Execution. And after their

their Worship was ended, the Captain came with his Band of Men; and the Marshal and Jayler brought *William Robinson* of *London*, Merchant, and *Marmaduke Stevenson* of the East-Part of *Yorkshire*, Country-man, out of the Prison, and *Mary Dyer* out of the House of Correction; who having parted from their Friends in Prison, full of the Joy of the Lord, who had counted them worthy to suffer for his Name, and kept them Faithful to the Death, and having embraced each other with Fervency of Love, and Gladness of Heart, and Peace with God, and Praises to the Lord, went out of Prison like Innocent Lambs, the Captain leading them on the Back-way (it seems they were afraid to go the Fore-way, lest it should too much touch the People) to the Place of Execution, and caused the Drums to beat when they attempted to speak, (hard Work) and placed them near the Drums for that purpose, that when they spoke the People might not hear them. And the Captain caused his Drums to beat, when they sought to speak; and his Drums he would not cease, tho' they spoke to him, whilst they ceased not to speak. O Barbarous Inhumanity! never heard of in the *English Nation*, to be used to Suffering People. And as he led them to the Place of Execution, one old Priest *Wilson*, the High Priest of *Boston*, who was of the same Principle with *John Atkinson*, and was so Blood-thirsty, that he would have had *Samuel Gorton*, and those with him long ago to be put to Death for their differing in Religion, and when but one Vote parted it, he was so mad, that he openly inveigh'd against him who did it, saying in the Pulpit, *Because thou hast let go the Man whom I have appointed for Destruction, thy Life shall go for his Life, and thy People for his People*; who, Preaching from that Text,

Text, said, *He would carry Fire in one Hand, and Faggots in the other, to burn all the Quakers in the World;* and this old Bloody Priest (of whom, with others of his Brethren in Iniquity, who persecuted the Just, there is a larger Account in a Book entituled, *New-England Judged, &c.*) met them in the *Train-Field*, and instead of having a Sense upon him suitable for such an Occasion, and as is usual with Men of any Tenderness, he fell a Taunting at *William Robinson*, and shaking his Hand, and in a light Scoffing manner said, *Shall such Jacks as you come in before Authority with your Hats on?* To which *W. R.* replied, *Mind you, mind you, it is for the not putting off the Hat we are put to Death.* And when *W. Robinson* went chearfully up the Ladder, to the topmost Round, above the Gallows, and spake to the People, That they suffered not this as Evil-doers, but as those who testified to, and manifested the Truth, and that this was the Day of their Visitation; and therefore desired them to mind the Light that was in them, the Light of Christ, of which he testified, and now was going to Seal it with his Blood: This old Priest, in much Wickedness, said, *Hold thy Tongue, be silent, thou art going to die with a Lye in thy Mouth;* when he spake of the Light of Christ within, of which he testified, as that which testifies against Evil, and which was sufficient to bring unto God, and for the Testimony of which he then suffered. So being come to the place of Execution, hand in hand all three, as to a Wedding, with great Chearfulness of Heart, and here took leave of each other, with the dear Embraces of one anothers Love, in the Love of the Lord; the Executioner put *William Robinson* to Death, and after him *Marmaduke Stevenson*, who died both of them full of the Joy of the Lord, and stedfast in Him, and have received

ceived a Crown of Life, sealing their Testimony with their Blood; which was the most that could be done: Their Countenances not changing, tho' the Priests thought to have found it otherwise, and some of them had spoke to this purpose, That they should see whether their Countenances would change when they had Halters about their Necks; but they remained in a manner as fresh, even after they were dead, as before, which was observed by some. Whose Bodies being dead, the Executioner was so barbarous, (with the Officers, and wicked Priest aforesaid) that when he cut them down, they were suffer'd to fall to the Ground, with which the Scull of *W. R.* broke, his Body being stiff before; and when they were down, their Shirts were ripp'd off with a Knife, and their naked Bodies cast into a Hole, which was digged, without any Covering; and when some Friends came and desired their Bodies, to put 'em into Coffins, and so into some inclosed Ground, where Beasts might not turn them up; the Executioner only suffer'd them to take 'em up, and wrap 'em in Linnen, and put 'em in again; but would not suffer them to be taken away, saying, *He was strictly charged to the contrary*; and when a Friend had caused Pales to be brought, to fence the place into which they were cast, that so their Bodies might not be prey'd upon by the Brute Creatures, (seeing they would not suffer them to be removed) he would not suffer it; but there left their Bodies together in a Pit in the open Field, which was soon covered with Water. And it's to be fear'd, if *J. A.* had Power, he would be the same, whose Principle is the same. Let the unbyass'd Reader judge, whether they have not ministred Occasion to cry, *O my Soul, come not thou into their Secret, unto their Assembly; mine Honour, be not thou united?* Having

Having been more large than I intended, I shall leave the Relation of the other two I mentioned, where they may find this at large, with the Cruel Usage our Friends had from them, in the aforesaid Book, called, *New-England Judged by the Spirit of the Lord*. The Author's unjust Charge against us, gave me the Occasion to relate the foregoing just Account of the *Absolute Predestinarian Doctrine*.

In Answer to Query 16. he saith, Page 80. ' From David's Exhorting Solomon to know God, ' and serve him, &c. the Querist insinuates, that ' God is undetermin'd about Man, till he sees how ' he'll Act; or that God doth not proceed with ' Men according to his own purpose, but waiteth ' for a Determination from them. Surely such an ' Intimation is Blasphemous and Abominable.

Reply. I did expect he should have had more Esteem for the Scriptures, than to say ought that is there recorded, or held forth, is Blasphemous and Abominable: But the Scriptures hold that forth; Therefore, according to him, it would be so. But I will not therefore say, the Scripture holds forth that which is Blasphemous and Abominable: I would have us have a more Honourable Esteem for the Holy Scriptures. But it is said, 1 Sam. 2. 27. *There came a Man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the House of thy Father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's House? And did I choose him out of all the Tribes of Israel to be my Priest, to offer upon my Altar, to burn Incense, and to wear an Ephod? And did I give unto the House of thy Father all the Offerings made by Fire of the Children of Israel? Wherefore kick ye at my Sacrifices, and at my Offerings, which I have commanded in my Habitation, and honourst thy Sons above me, to make your selves fat with*

with the chiefest of all the Offerings of Israel my People? Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed, that thy House, and the House of thy Father, should walk before me for ever: But now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed. Now when he sees such Evil Fruit brought forth, Be it far from him, &c. as may be seen also in Jeremiah 18. 7. which I quoted before. And also in the Parable concerning the Fig-tree, spoken by our Lord, *A certain Man had a Fig-tree planted in his Vineyard, and he came and sought Fruit thereon, and found none. Then said he to the Dresser of the Vineyard, Behold, these three Years I come seeking Fruit on this Fig-tree, but find none; Cut it down, why cumbereth it the Ground. And he answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this Year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it; and if it shall bear Fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.* By all which it appears, God doth determine by Mens Actions; according to that Saying, *Behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give to every Man according as his Work shall be.* The rest of the Answer I have Reply'd to already in other Answers (and being his own perverse Inferences) so shall pass them by.

In Answer to Query 17. he saith, Page 82.
 ' The Design of all the Reasoning, and repeating
 ' the same Thing in another Instance, is to infer,
 ' there's no Decree, because there are Commands;
 ' or if there be a Decree, there needs no means to
 ' accomplish it.

Reply. We are not against the Decrees of God, be it far from us; but against that Principle they hold of the *Absolute Predestination* of the greatest part of *Mankind unto Eternal Reprobation*; that goes too far.

far beyond the Bounds of Scripture, viz. ' God
 ' from all Eternity did, by the most wise and ho-
 ' ly Counsel of his own Will, freely and un-
 ' changeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass.—
 ' By the decree of God, for the Manifestation of
 ' his Glory, some Men and Angels are predesti-
 ' nated unto Everlasting Life, and others fore-
 ' ordained to Everlasting Death. These Angels
 ' and Men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained,
 ' are particularly and unchangeably designed, and
 ' their Number is so certain and definite, that it
 ' cannot be either increased or diminished. This
 doth manifestly Contradict what was spoken by
 the Lord himself, *The Lord God, Merciful and Gra-
 cious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness, &c.*
Exod. 34. 6. And also the Saying of Christ, *Luke*
*6. 36. Be ye merciful, as your heavenly Father is mer-
 ciful.* If there were such a Decree, which never
 can be proved, what can such say of his Mercy,
 and of his Justice, who are thus fore-ordained to
 Everlasting Death, (and that before they had a
 Being) and to Dishonour and Wrath? How dis-
 agreeable is this Doctrine to the Testimony of
John, who saith, *God is Love; and in this was the*
Love of God manifested toward us, because that God
sent his only begotten Son into the World, that we
might live through him. And lest it should be ob-
 jected, That was only to the Elect; he leaves it
 not so, but also saith, *My little Children, these things*
write I unto you, that you sin not; and if any Man
sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ
the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins,
and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole
World. What room doth the Apostle leave them
 to entertain such hard Thoughts, and from thence
 such hard Speeches? *For out of the abundance of*
the Heart the Mouth speaketh. Which *J. A.* blames
 us

us for; but he may take it home to himself, if the Impartial may but Judge.

In his Answer to Query 18. he saith, Page 83.
 ' There's no such thing signified in the Decree you
 ' cite of God's Universal Love to Mankind. The
 ' Decree here declared, is the Purpose of God for
 ' advancing or preferring his Son Jesus to be Re-
 ' deemer and Ruler, &c. But we know you chief-
 ' ly design to insist on that in *ver. 8. Ask of me,*
 ' *and I will give thee the Heathen for thine Inheritance,*
 ' *and the uttermost parts of the Earth for thy Posses-*
 ' *sion.* Now say you, *If the Heathen be given to*
 ' *the Son of God, and the uttermost parts of the Earth*
 ' *for his Possession, where's then the Number that*
 ' *from Eternity is decreed to Damnation?* Answ. If
 ' you will consult the Bible better, you will find
 ' Numbers left out of this Gift. For you may
 ' not think that every individual Gentile was
 ' given to Christ to redeem and bring to Heaven,
 ' which is manifest from *Acts 15. 14. Simeon hath*
 ' *declared how God at first did visit the Gentiles, to*
 ' *take out of them a People for his Name.*

Reply. Let me add of the following Words, on
 behalf of the Apostle, a little more to the Text,
 before I Reply, viz. *And to this agree the Words of*
the Prophets; as it is written, After this I will return,
and will build again the Tabernacle of David, which
is fallen down; and I will build again the Ruines there-
of, and I will set it up: That the residue of Men might
seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my
Name is called, saith the Lord, who doth all these
things. As if he had said, So far as his Name
 was called upon, all might have the Benefit of it;
 which was to the Ends of the Earth: As the Apo-
 stle saith in these Words, *But I say, Have they not*
all heard? Yes verily, their Sound went into all the
 D Earth;

Earth, and their Words unto the end of the World: Which certainly must be Universal; and if we do but take the Apostle's Words together, *that the Residue of Men might seek after the Lord,* we shall so understand it, as if he had said, *The rest of Men, whether of the Stock of the Jews, of whom it was said they were God's peculiar People; or of the Stock of the Gentiles, of whom also it was said, I will call them my People, which were not my People; and her Beloved, which was not Beloved. And it shall come to pass in that place, where it was said, Ye are not my People, there shall they be called the Children of the living God.* But I have cause to Complain of J. A. concerning this Text, as of that in *Joshua*, for taking part, and leaving that which gives the Definition; which must of necessity violate the Text, and make it look quite another thing. Such Doings would make the best of Men seem the worst. As for Instance: Where *David* saith, *The Fool hath said in his Heart, There is no God;* if we leave out, *The Fool hath said in his Heart,* we shall make *David* appear like an Atheist, to say, *There is no God.* So bad is the Consequence, that *Truth* may be taken for *Error.* And for his Paraphrasing on that part, I shall not take notice of it, except he had taken the rest: But proceed to his next Text of Scripture, *viz.*

'When the Gentiles heard thereof, they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to Eternal Life believed.'

Reply. If this Text should bear this Sense, and be taken in a general way, and so understood, it would make void the rest of the Labours of not only these, but all the other Apostles; and not only there, but in all other places; and in particular the rest of the Service the same Apostles had at *Iconium*: For there they went together into the

the Synagogue, and it is said, a great Multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. Now must not they have the Advantage that those had at Antioch? If we may believe what John speaks concerning Christ, they will be included, viz. He came to his own, and his own received him not: But to as many as received him, to them he gave Power to become the Sons of God; even to as many as believed in his Name. And these at Iconium believed, &c. If it should be understood in particular at Antioch, all Labour would be in vain, of begetting any more unto the Faith, because as many as were ordained to Eternal Life believed already: So to believe, would be of very bad Consequence. But the right Translation of the word Ordained is, to set in Order, or in fit Posture of Mind. Which must of necessity be the Qualification ere we can attain to Eternal Life.

His Answer to Query 19. is, Page 85. 'I suppose you would infer from the Text you cite, that inasmuch as God makes a general Tender to all, therefore he hath an equal Respect to all. There can no such thing be inferr'd from the Text.'

Reply. I do believe, according to the Parable of our Lord, that God gives Talents to every Man, according to his several Abilities, whether Five, Two, or One. The least Measure, if faithful thereto, shall have the Answer of *Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord*; which is enough for any Man. This Author hath drunk deep into this Doctrine, if he cannot see such plain Scripture-proofs, that he dare say there can be no such thing inferr'd from the Text. But if the Text may be allow'd to speak for it self, those that are not blinded with Pre-

judice, may plainly understand, God gives to every Man a Day of Visitation, wherein he would pour forth of his Spirit upon them, and make known his Words unto them; and make the Heart, that hath been like a Barren Wilderness, become a Fruitful Field: And, according to the Saying of the Prophet, *The parched Ground shall become a Pool, and the thirsty Land springs of Water; and in the Habitations of Dragons, where each lay, shall be Grass, with Reeds and Rushes, and a Highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness, the unclean shall not pass over it; but the Wayfaring Man, though a Fool, shall not err therein; as in the Margent, The Lord shall be with them; and the Redeemed shall walk there; and the Ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with Songs, and everlasting Joy upon their Heads; they shall obtain Joy and Gladness, and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away.* O happy Change to those who harken to Wisdom's Voice! And by the Query it may be seen, the Simple, the Scorners, and the Fools, upon Condition of turning at the Voice of Wisdom, had the Promise of the *pouring out of the Spirit*; which is Powerful, as they embrace the Proffers thereof, to translate from the Power of Darkness, (where the old Dragon has had a place in the Hearts of Men, to lead them into Sin, the Wages whereof is Death) into the Kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins. But if they do not hearken to the Voice of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is here testified under the Name of Wisdom, it may be said, *Because I have Called, and ye have Refused; I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded; but you have set at nought all my Counsel, and would have none of my Reproof: I also will laugh at your Calamities, and*
mock

mock when your Fear cometh; when your Fear cometh as Desolation, and your Destruction as a Whirlwind; when Distress and Anguish cometh upon you, then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; then shall they seek me early, but shall not find me: And the Reason that here is given is, For that ye hated Knowledge, and did not choose the Fear of the Lord. By which it doth appear, they might have chosen (the Text does not say, they could not choose) the Fear of the Lord: But, They would have none of my Counsel, they despised all my Reproof; and therefore fell short: For the Reproofs of Instruction are the Way of Life. Which also answers to the Exhortation, or rather Command of our Blessed Lord, viz. Yet a little while is the Light with you; walk while ye have the Light, lest Darkness come upon you: For he that walketh in Darkness, knoweth not whether he goeth. And also, Are there not Twelve Hours in the Day? If any Man walk in the Day, he stumbles not. And Jerusalem had a Day of Visitation, as may be understood by the Lamentation our Lord took up concerning Jerusalem, saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy Children together, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, but ye would not. It is also said, when he was come near, and beheld the City, he wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy Day, the things that belong to thy Peace, but now they are hid from thine Eyes. By all which it may be seen, God is giving a Day of Visitation to the Sons and Daughters of Men, and would gather all, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens. And we see how the Hen would gather all her Chickens under her Wings; she would not have any left to be devoured by the Birds of Prey. Oh the exceeding Love of God, through his Son the Lord Jesus Christ, to poor Mortals, is, He

would have all come to the Knowledge of the Truth, and be saved! These Scriptures do prove the Universality of God's Love to Mankind, and comprehends the rest of his Answer.

His Answer to Query 20. is, Page 86. 'God's
' Decrees make not the Reprobates Obedience
' impossible, but his own perverse, depraved Will,
' which he neither can nor will renew. God's
' Decree leaves the Non-Elect to their own Ma-
' nagement, and is far from hindring them in the
' Exercise of their Free-will.

Reply. If he *cannot*, it is Nonsense to say he *will not*: For Necessity hath no Law. If it be the Eternal Decree he means, he may as well say there is no Decree. Thus Arguing, doth make void his Principle concerning the Decree, if it be of no more force.

He saith, ' That the Impossibility of their Obe-
' dience proceeds from their Enmity to God, and
' for want of the Law of God written in their
' Hearts.

Reply. He should have said, *For want of taking heed to the Law of God written in their Hearts*; and then we should be agreed. But we see, he dwells not long in this Mind: For,

He saith, ' You'll say, Doth God's Decree in
' no Respect make Man's Obedience impossible?
' I answer, In some Respect it doth. We'll open
' it by a Similitude: Suppose a Man were in-
' debted to you an Hundred Pound, and he hath
' lost your Money, and hath nothing to pay with,
' neither hath a Friend in the World that can or
' will help him, with all or any part of it: Now if
' you will not give this Man your Hundred Pounds,
' you make it impossible for him to pay, &c.

Reply. This Comparison implies, he had that
which

which was sufficient; which makes void the Eternal Decree: For, according to it, God withholds from the Reprobates all Means of Salvation from Eternity, or before they had a Being. But from this it may be inferr'd, he had given Man a Gift, which (if it had been improved) might have been sufficient, and there had been no need of casting him into Prison. This is like the Unprofitable Servant's Non-improvement of his Talent. So here, by his Comparison, he destroys his own Doctrine concerning the Absolute Eternal Decree; for that (to wit, the Eternal Decree) implies, as if the Man was charged with a Hundred Pound, which he received; and then, because he could not make full Payment, was cast into Prison. This would seem Unreasonable in, or amongst, Rational Men. But more Unreasonable do they render Almighty God, because that is only a Punishment in this Life; but, according to their Doctrine, Man must be punished for ever, for not doing that they never received Power from God to assist them to do.

He farther saith, 'God by his Decree makes it 'not impossible for any Man to do his Duty, but 'only by denying to restore the Power that Man 'once had, and has abandon'd it, or forfeited it 'by his Fall.

Reply. As if it were a small thing to deny to Restore the Power that Man once had; when, without it, he is altogether Miserable, and can do nothing in order to his Salvation. But the Apostle is not of his Mind, who saith, *As by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; so by the Righteousness of one, the Free-Gift is come upon all Men to Justification of Life.* By which it may be understood, Christ Jesus hath made up the Loss we have sustained in Adam, by

his Sufferings, Mediation and Gifts; as it is said of him, *Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led Captivity captive; thou hast received Gifts for Men, yea, for the Rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them, Psal. 68. 18.*

He farther saith, 'If you have Two Debtors, both Insolvent; may you not forgive the one, and advance in your Kindness towards him, and still insist on Payment from the other, and for want of Payment execute just Punishment?

Reply. His Comparison will not hold: *God is no Respector of Persons; His Ways are Equal; Man's Ways are Unequal.* It is not only a Few, but All in the Fall have forfeited their Power: And why the Lord should deny to Restore to some, more than others, that Power Man once had, they can give no just Reason; because, if it were, (which never can be proved) it must be by the Eternal Decree, and that was before Mankind could provoke the Lord by Sinning. And it is Nonsense to tell of Restoring of that, which he never had: For before he was Born, he was not Capable of any thing; and it must be before that, if it was from Eternity denied, or restored.

He farther saith, 'Beware of limiting the Holy One of Israel.

Reply. I would have him and his take that home to themselves: It's their Principle, not ours, to limit the Holy One; and so far, as to a Certain Number, which are so particularly and unchangeably designed, and their Number so definite and so certain, that it cannot be either increased or diminished, and that without the foresight of Faith, or Good Works, or Perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the Creature, as Causes moving him thereunto, &c. Is not this to Limit the Holy One?

His

His Answer to Query 21. is, Page 88. ' This
 ' Scripture has no design to hold forth the *Qua-*
 ' *kers* Universal Grace; for the Sense of the Text
 ' is, That God would not still confine his Church
 ' to the Jews, but when Christ came, he should
 ' have a Church from amongst the Gentiles, for
 ' a more ample Reward of his Sufferings. Christ
 ' had all the Elect, both Jews and Gentiles, given
 ' to him, to be saved by him, as the Reward
 ' of his Undertaking, and effecting Man's Re-
 ' demption.

Reply. My Opponent seems here to Restrain
 Wisdom to himself, and take upon him to Ex-
 pound the Words of the Prophet, and to limit
 his Prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ to a cer-
 tain Number; but can bring no Scripture-Proof,
 nor suffer the Text to Explain it self, which doth
 in these very Words make void his Argument,
viz. That thou mayst be my Salvation to the End of
the Earth. Here all Mankind is included, and Sal-
 vation is offered through Christ; as was spoken
 by the same Evangelical Prophet, *All we like Sheep*
have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own
way; and the Lord hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all,
the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and with
his Stripes we are healed.

If it should be Objected, He was of the Stock
 of *Israel*, and he spoke concerning them, and it
 was only them of whom he meant.

Ans. My Opponent's Argument concerning
 both Jews and Gentiles do take away that Ob-
 jection; as also the Text it self doth intimate both
 Jews and Gentiles: Therefore it must include,
 that all have the Offer of Salvation. Which an-
 swers to the Sayings of the Apostle, *I exhort there-*
fore, that first of all Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions,
 and

and giving of Thanks be made for all Men: for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all Men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth. For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus: Who gave himself a Ransom for all, to be testified in due time. What plainer Text can be desired, to prove the Universality of God's Love to Mankind, than these of the Apostle, except People do wilfully shut their Eyes?

His Answer to Query 22. is, Page 88. 'The Quakers improve this Text to prove, that God never foresaw this wicked Idolatry. And if it were so, it would be agreeable to their Thoughts, viz. That the Creature by Acting determines the Creator in Purposing. But consider, this Idolatry was foreseen by God, before it was acted by Men. The true Meaning of this Text is, *saith he*, That it never came into God's Mind to Command them to burn their Children to Baal. It never came into God's Mind or Purpose to make that unnatural and abominable Idolatry any part of his Worship: But it came into God's Mind from Eternity to permit this Sin, and to punish the Apostate *Israelites* for it.

Reply. I own God's Fore-knowledge, and have Reply'd to part of this before in several Answers. But he takes upon him to give the Prophet the Contradiction, who spake in the Name of the Lord, as if he were wiser; although he can bring no Proof for it; and his bare Word will not serve for Proof.

He saith, ' But it came into God's Mind from Eternity to permit this Sin, and to punish the Apostate *Israelites* for it.

Reply. Here he seems to restrain Wisdom to himself,

self, as if he had known God's Mind, or been his Counsellor. But seeing he was not then in Being, and no Text in Scripture will prove it, he takes too much upon him so positively to say, *It came into God's Mind to permit it.* For though the word *Permit* be put here in their *Confession of Faith*, there's nothing of it. They say, 'God 'from all Eternity, &c. did freely and unchange-
'ably ordain whatsoever comes to pass: And the Burning of their Children came to pass. But what the Consequence is, would be Blasphemy to be attributed to the Infinite Divine Being. And till he proves it, let it rest upon him as a Falſity, except he Repents of all his ungodly hard Speeches against the Holy One of *Israel*.

'If you say, *saith he*, You cannot see how that 'can be just. *Ans.* When you know God and 'your Selves better, you'll then see farther into 'this Matter.

Reply. Here he leaves room for the Reader to question whether he himself believes it to be just, in that he hath given no Proof to convince me of the Verity of it; but comes off with a Sham, in an Envious, Malicious, Taunting Way, too much like his Brethren in *New-England*; he manifests the same Spirit, but that he wants Power.

He saith, 'That the Absolute Predestinarian 'Doctrine is, That God hath Decreed many 'Things which he doth not Command. You 'argue, That if God hath not Commanded a 'Thing, he hath not Decreed it: This is big 'with abominable Error.

Reply. But when did God decree these many things: Except they can prove it from Eternity, it will make nothing for them. And this is not fair Dealing, nor from a Christian Spirit, to say I argue so and so, as he judges is Erroneous, which

which I never spoke; that he may say, *it is big with abominable Error.* But it is Error of his own making, which he would, by his Dialoguing, fix upon us: It is not our Judgment. And for him to say I argue what I never said, nor thought; this is indeed big with Abominable Error, and he is guilty of it.

He said, 'God decreed the Betraying and Crucifying of his Son Jesus, but he did not command it.

Reply. It was after Man had sinned, the Seed of the Woman, Christ Jesus was promised, that should bruise the Serpent's Head; because it was after Mankind sinned there was need of an Atonement, not before: Nor doth any thing he hath yet brought, prove it was before.

He saith, God decreed Joseph's Selling into Egypt, but did by no means command that Unnatural Act, &c.

Reply. How proves he this? Only by saying, It was decreed from Eternity; and that's saying nothing, to any purpose: For we are not against the Decrees of the Allwise Merciful God, as he sees meet.

And for Blasphemy, he cannot charge it upon us, or our Principles: We are not against God's Omniscieny. He may maliciously charge us with *Blasphemies*, as he did before with being *big with abominable Error*; and it is that he would put upon us: But from nothing that we hold can he convict us of Blasphemy.

In his Answer to Query 23. he saith, Page 90.
'May you not say to the Man you are carrying
'to the Goal for Debt, I desire not your Punishment by Imprisonment, but rather you would
'pay me what you owe, and become a better Man
'for

for the future? And yet you'll proceed to his Imprisonment, except he pay.

Reply. This Comparison is the same with that in his Answer to Query 20. and both intimate something given, whether from God or Man. There is an Account to be given. And the Apostle saith, *A Manifestation of the Spirit is given to Every One to profit withal*: And also the Prophet takes up a Parable concerning the Vineyard, viz. *My Well-beloved had a Vineyard in a very fruitful Hill, and he fenced it, and gather'd out the Stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest Vine; and built a Tower in the midst of it, and also made a Wine-Press therein: And he looked, that it should bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and Men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my Vineyard. What could have been done more to my Vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore when I looked, that it should bring forth Grapes, and it brought forth wild Grapes. All which do intimate, God took great Pains with it, although it brought forth wild Grapes. Now the Lord will be clear: Although, as he spake concerning the Vineyard, He should take away the Hedge thereof, that it be eaten up; and break down the Wall thereof, that it be trodden, and laid waste; and it shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall come up Briers and Thorns. I will also command the Clouds, that they rain no Rain upon it. Although now the Vineyard is utterly incapable of bringing forth Fruit, by what is done unto it, yet it cannot be understood, it was by an Eternal Decree; but that which was decreed after the wild Grapes were brought forth, and because thereof: According to that Saying, I will command the Clouds, that they rain no Rain upon*

upon it; which do intimate, not yet done, but rather the future time, and therefore not from Eternity.

The Comparison he hath brought concerning the Man which he tells of carrying to the Goal for Debt, makes against the Eternal Decree: In that, if it be for Debt, it doth intimate he had received something, which he ought to have improved. But, according to the Absolute Decree from Eternity, God with-holds from those he calls *Reprobates* all Means of Salvation.

His Answer to Query 24. is, Page 91. 'This is about Conditional Acceptance, only in another Scripture-Instance. Your Comparison hath nothing but Folly, or worse in it; for God condemns none but guilty Persons, and how do we make God less Merciful than *Nebuchadnezzar*?

Reply. I need go no farther than the Text: The Reason I gave before. And seeing he saith, My Comparison hath nothing but Folly, or worse; I shall set it down, and leave it to the Unprejudiced to judge, (and also because he asks, how we make God less Merciful than *Nebuchadnezzar*?) viz. "Because *Nebuchadnezzar* commanded them first to be brought before him, and said unto them, *Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? Do ye not serve my Gods, nor worship the Golden Image, which I have set up? Now if ye be ready, that at what time ye hear the Sound of the Cornet, Flute, Harp, Sackbut, Psaltery and Dulcimer, and all kinds of Musick, ye fall down and worship the Image, which I have made, well: But if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same Hour into the midst of a Burning Fiery Furnace, &c.* Here we may see, he made Enquiry at their own Mouths, whether the Report he had heard

“heard of them was true, yea or nay; and then
 “offer’d them Conditions, whereby they might
 “escape the casting into the Burning Fiery Fur-
 “nace; whereas Man hath no Conditions offer’d
 “him, according to this Doctrine, in order to
 “his escaping Eternal Misery, but must be for
 “ever tormented, for not doing that which he
 “was never able to do.

He farther saith, ‘*Nebuchadnezzar* condemned
 ‘good Men for serving God, but God condemn-
 ‘eth none but bad Men for serving the Devil.’

Reply. If God decreed from Eternity, which is
 according to their Principle, to with-hold all
 Means of doing Good from those he calls *Repro-*
bates, it was before they were Bad, or could serve
 the Devil; and therefore would be made impos-
 sible by the Eternal Decree, as they handle it;
 tho’ here he says to the contrary. And how by
 this is God both Just and Merciful? This strikes
 hard at Justice. But remember, this is not our
 Principle: Far be it from us to attribute any
 thing to God, contrary to his Holiness, Justice
 and Mercy; for *his Mercy is over all the Works of*
his Hands: And how much more Man, the No-
 blest Part of his Creation, whom he Created in
 his own Image, Male and Female created he them?
 How much less would he decree the Destruction
 of far the greatest Part of Mankind, and with-
 hold from them all Means of Salvation, and or-
 dain them to Dishonour and Wrath, &c. and all
 for the Glory of his Sovereign Power over his
 Creatures?

He farther saith, ‘God is just in his Proceed-
 ‘ing with Reprobates; for he commands em no-
 ‘thing but what is their Duty to do. He calls
 ‘only for his own from them.’

Reply. By this it appears, Man hath something
 of

of the Nature of God committed to his Charge; and also may be understood in the Parable concerning the Talents: For when the Unprofitable Servant came and said, *Lo, there thou hast, that is thine*; his Lord answered him, *Thou wicked Servant, if thou knewest that I reaped where I did not sow, and gathered where I did not straw, thou oughtest therefore to have put my Money to the Exchanger, and then at my coming I might have received mine own with Usury, &c. and Cast the unprofitable Servant into utter Darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth.* This Author saith, He only calls for his own from 'em: But take notice, it would not do for the Unprofitable Servant. Although he could say, *Here's thy own*; he could not have from his Lord the Answer of *Well done, good and faithful Servant, Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

He saith, 'Their will not going along with their cannot makes 'em culpable. And tho' they have lost their Power of Obeying, God loseth not his Power of Commanding and Punishing his own Creatures.

Reply. I have Answer'd to such-like before. But so saying doth imply a Gift given; they could not lose that they never had: And if they had, and did not improve, the fault was their own. But this makes against the Absolute Decree from Eternity, in that he saith, 'God hath not lost his Power to command and punish his own Creatures. He would vainly suggest, God delights more in Punishment, than in Mercy; when the Lord by his Prophet hath said, *He delights not in the Punishment of the Wicked.*

He saith, 'You often repeat the Substance of that Objection, which the Apostle foresaw, viz. 'Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his Will?

Reply.

Reply. God doth not find fault, where his Will is not resisted; and it is those who have received a Manifestation of his Spirit, and do not profit with it, but do resist his Will, with whom he finds fault.

He saith, ' Yet consider the Apostle calls this
' a *Replying against God.*

Answ. The Margin hath it, *Answerest thou again,*
or *Disputest thou with God:* So it is in the Original.

He refers the Reader in particular to his Reply to Query 2. and Query 5. as though he had done some great Matters there. But the Reader, if Unbyassed, or not Bigotted with their Doctrine, will find these (like the rest) stuff'd with Confusion.

In Answer to Query 25. he saith, Page 39.
' What you say here, is but saying over again
' what you have often said, *viz. Why doth he yet*
' *find fault? For who hath resisted his Will?*

Answ. This I have Reply'd to in the last Answer. Though he charges it upon me, it is false; I never yet said it. And the rest of this Answer, I have Reply'd to in some Answers before.

In his Answer to Query 26. he saith, Page 93.
' Doubtless God had his Elect among these Persons that the Prophet exhorted to Repentance;
' and this Exhortation was God's appointed Means
' for their Conversion and Reformation, and therefore it was not in vain to them; and if it was in
' vain to any, it was their own fault, and not
' chargeable on God, as we have observed before.

Reply. Here he seems partly to be of our Judgment; but I am doubtful it is no more than to

blind People, as touching the Eternal Decree, to soften it: For, according to their Confession of Faith, *God from all Eternity, &c. decreed whatever comes to pass*; and if it came to pass, that some of these People; upon the Prophet's Exhortation, did turn unto the Lord, and the Lord repented of the Evil; yet such as did not turn, according to their Doctrine of the aforesaid Decree, could not turn unto the Lord, because he had decreed they should not. As he saith also in this Answer:

'And tho' God exhorts all to rent their Hearts,
'and turn to him; yet the Moral Power of Com-
'plying with the Exhortation is but given to
'some.

Reply. Observe the Confusion this Man runs in-
to. A little before he said, *If it was in vain to any,*
it was their own Fault: How is it their own Fault,
if it be but given to some? Let him reconcile
these Two, or let it rest upon him as Fallacious.

He saith, 'Yet we dare not tell God, that 'tis
'vain to exhort all to turn, when he only gives
'the Ability to some.

Reply. But they dare positively affix a notorious
Falseness upon God, which they can bring no
Proof for, with all their Sophistry.

He saith, 'We leave that to Men, that dare
'contend with their Maker, and so confidently
'reply against God.

Reply. Let him prove who it is that replieth
against God, for we deny it; and his confident
Say-so is no Proof: Neither doth our Principle
teach any to Reply against God.

In Answer to Query 27. he saith, Page 94.
'It was their Sin that disabled them for seeking
'God, and not the Decree; and therefore their
'not seeking God was their own Fault; though
'doubtless

‘doubtless it was absolutely decreed that some
‘among these should seek the Lord, and live; and
‘God would quicken those by this Exhortation to
‘seek him.

Reply. By this he insinuates, it was but some
could seek the Lord; but what made it impossible
for others? He doth not here say, It was God’s
Decree from Eternity; but is included in their
Confession of Faith, which he hath cited, viz. ‘God
‘from all Eternity hath freely and unchangeably
‘ordain’d whatever comes to pass: And it came
to pass that some fell short: Therefore, by this
Doctrine, those that fell short could not seek the
Lord, because God unchangeably ordain’d they
should not. So that he lays all upon God, what-
ever he may suggest to the contrary.

He saith, ‘You would insinuate, That if God
‘hath decreed any thing, he must command no-
‘thing.

Reply. This is what he hath often said, although
false; and I have Reply’d to it before. It is not
our Principle, but what he wickedly imposes up-
on us.

He saith, ‘But notwithstanding your Dislike of
‘God’s Management, he’ll decree what shall be
‘done, and command what should be done. And
‘tho’ you will not understand this now, yet you
‘shall hereafter.

Reply. He charges us falsely: We are not against
God’s Decrees nor Commands; but, as the Lord
doth enlarge our Hearts, we can run the Ways of
his Command: They are not at all Grievous, but
Joyous.

This Author hath set himself in the Judgment-
Seat, and doth prophesie: But we may be thank-
ful to Almighty God, that he hath not so much
Power as *John Endicott* (an Independant, and Go-

vernour of *New-England*) had, who gave Sentence of Death upon our Friends there, which was Executed upon them, because they could not Believe as he did.

He saith, 'Tis a Wonder that a People, that
 ' pretend so much to Divine Revelation, and new
 ' Discoveries, and to manage all by the Spirit's
 ' Motions, should notwithstanding make meer Hu-
 ' mane Reason their only Guide in the greatest
 ' Depths of Divinity. The greatest Mysteries of
 ' the Gospel must be owned for Truths, no far-
 ' ther than they will come within the Compass of
 ' their Carnal Reasonings.

Reply. My Opponent goes on with his Charges by wholesale; but they are utterly false, and it's a great degree of Wickedness to charge 'em upon us; and it's our Happiness they are so. But I have heard *T. Dixon*, *S. Audland* and *H. Winder* have had a Hand in his Work; but seeing his Hand only to it, he must Answer for it. I must confess, I had better Thoughts concerning him, than that he should be so notoriously Wicked, and so full of Enmity, as to accuse us so highly, and with so many false Accusations; and if it hath been his only, I have been mistaken of him. He may take that home to themselves, to *make meer Humane Reason their only Guide* (as he saith of us) *in the greatest Depths of Divinity*. For what else have they to ground their Confession of Faith upon? *viz.*
 ' God from all Eternity did freely and unchange-
 ' ably ordain whatever comes to pass: For which they have no Proof from Holy Scripture; and therefore, except they pretend to be Inspired, meer Humane Reason is their only Guide in what they call the greatest Depths of Divinity; and the greatest Mysteries of the Gospel must be owned for Truths no farther than they will come within
 the

the compass of their Carnal Reasonings. There's nothing else they can pretend to : *For as no Man, saith the Apostle, knoweth the things of a Man, save the Spirit of Man that is in him : So the things of God knoweth no Man, but by the Spirit of God ;* the Motions of which he derides. Therefore let him search, if it be not applicable to them ; with all the rest of his pretended Answer to that Query.

His Answer to Query 28. is, Page 95. ' We grant that *Esau's* Violence against his Brother *Jacob* was the cause of his utter Ruin, according as the Prophet means. But pray what was the violent Dealing of *Esau* against *Jacob* ? Was not *Jacob* rather chargeable with subtil Dealing with *Esau*, in that he supplanted him both of his Birthright and Blessing ?

Reply. Observe, Reader, my Query was to shew, That the Judgment of God, which the Prophet *Obadiah* denounced against *Edom*, Ob. 10. which was the Seed of *Esau*, was not decreed from Eternity by Fore-ordination, viz. That Shame should cover them, and they should be cut off for ever, because of the Violence which he actually Executed against them, as the Prophet declares ; see *Obad.* 10, to 15. Which my Opposer hath granted. And yet asks, *What was the Violence of Esau to his Brother Jacob ?* To which I answer, according as he hath granted, Enough to provoke the Lord to Indignation against them. But then he querieth, *Was not Jacob rather chargeable with subtil Dealing against Esau, in that he supplanted him both of his Birth-right and Blessing ?* By which he goes from the Violence of the People instanced in my Query, (viz. the *Edomites*, who were the Off-spring of *Esau*) to the Violence of *Esau* to his Brother *Jacob*, in the Day he sold his

vernour of *New-England*) had, who gave Sentence of Death upon our Friends there, which was Executed upon them, because they could not Believe as he did.

He saith, 'Tis a Wonder that a People, that pretend so much to Divine Revelation, and new Discoveries, and to manage all by the Spirit's Motions, should notwithstanding make meer Humane Reason their only Guide in the greatest Depths of Divinity. The greatest Mysteries of the Gospel must be owned for Truths, no farther than they will come within the Compass of their Carnal Reasonings.

Reply. My Opponent goes on with his Charges by wholesale; but they are utterly false, and it's a great degree of Wickedness to charge 'em upon us; and it's our Happiness they are so. But I have heard *T. Dixon*, *S. Audland* and *H. Winder* have had a Hand in his Work; but seeing his Hand only to it, he must Answer for it. I must confess, I had better Thoughts concerning him, than that he should be so notoriously Wicked, and so full of Enmity, as to accuse us so highly, and with so many false Accusations; and if it hath been his only, I have been mistaken of him. He may take that home to themselves, to *make meer Humane Reason their only Guide* (as he saith of us) *in the greatest Depths of Divinity*. For what else have they to ground their Confession of Faith upon? *viz.* God from all Eternity did freely and unchangeably ordain whatever comes to pass: For which they have no Proof from Holy Scripture; and therefore, except they pretend to be Inspired, meer Humane Reason is their only Guide in what they call the greatest Depths of Divinity; and the greatest Mysteries of the Gospel must be owned for Truths no farther than they will come within the

the compass of their Carnal Reasonings. There's nothing else they can pretend to : *For as no Man, saith the Apostle, knoweth the things of a Man, save the Spirit of Man that is in him : So the things of God knoweth no Man, but by the Spirit of God ;* the Motions of which he derides. Therefore let him search, if it be not applicable to them ; with all the rest of his pretended Answer to that Query.

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Birth-right, and lost his Blessing; which Violence he calls an intended Violence, and saith, Will it not be hard Measure, that he should thus suffer for that which he committed not, though he intended it? And brings it in Equality with their Doctrine, (which foolishly insinuates God to be the Author of Eternal Damnation, by a Fore-ordination from Eternity, to a certain Number, whilst yet they are Unborn; and so consequently not capable of Acting; or intending Violence, or occasion of Displeasure against Him or his People;) by which he discovers his Weakness of Judgment, in discerning the Difference between Things and Things, in the Comparison of them; having rejected that which Illuminates the Spirit of Man, and gives an Understanding of the Things of God.

But he proceeds, and saith, 'My Querist brings 'in the Prophet threatening of *Esau* of being cut 'off for ever, long after he was dead.

Reply. This is foolishly insinuated, and falsely charged upon my Query. For, if his Understanding were not grossly darkned by the God of this World, he would see my Query intimated no such Matter: Neither doth the Prophet there speak of *Esau* the Son of *Isaac*; but the *Edomites*, whom the Prophet there calls by the Name of *Esau*, their Progenitor.

That the People were meant, by the Person, is plain from *Numb. 20. 14, &c.* And *Moses sent Messengers from Cadesh unto the King of Edom, Thus saith thy Brother Israel. — Ver. 17. Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy Country: we will not pass through the Fields, nor through the Vineyards; neither will we drink of the Water of the Wells: we will go by the King's High-way, we will not turn to the right hand; nor to the left, until we have passed thy Borders.* Observe here,

I. That

1. That altho' *Moses* saith, *Thy Brother Israel*; yet, as I said, meaneth the *People*, or *Children of Israel*.

2. The Denial of a Request so Reasonable, together with the Threats of a Sword, by the *Posterity* (and not *Person*) of *Esau*, upon such a small Adventure, as passing quietly through the Borders of their Land, was gross Violence: Yet the Prophet *Obadiab* charges them with that which is still more gross, *ver. 14.* before express'd; which, doubtless, he would not have done, had not the same been Fact.

So that the Unbyass'd Reader may clearly see his Forgery; which, whether it be through Ignorance or Malice, I shall leave it to him to judge.

Having thus far answered my Opposer, and cleared my Query, I shall return again to that part of his Answer, where he saith, 'What was the Violence of *Esau* to his Brother? Was not *Jacob* rather chargeable with subtil Dealing, in that he both supplanted him of his Birthright and Blessing?

What would my Opponent infer from this? seeing I have shewed, that he cannot prove the Prophet *Obadiab* threatned for ever to cut off *Esau*, the immediate Son of *Isaac*, or his Posterity, for the Violence that he intended against *Jacob*, (*viz.* to slay him) which he seems to allow of; though he would charge it upon me, and would seem to bring this as it were in the Balance, of the Justice of God against *Jacob*, because he purchased the Birthright, and obtained the Blessing; by which he would seem to render *Jacob* more Obnoxious to the Wrath of God than *Esau* - for his intended cruel Murther.

In Answer to Query 29. he saith, Page 96.
 ' May not a Prince be very Gracious and Merciful, and yet punish Malefactors? Nay, may not
 ' a Gracious Sovereign give abundantly and bountifully to some undeserving Persons, and yet deny this Bounty to others?

Reply. This is all but Humane Reason, and going from the Nature of God (whose Ways are Equal, who will reward every Man according as his Works shall be) to the Nature of Man; and when he hath no Scripture, he brings his simple Comparisons. It is a bad Cause that cannot get one Scripture to prove the Authority of it: For a great many of his Answers may well be called *Pretended*, they not having one Sentence of Scripture in them, but made up of meer Humane Reason, and much of it Confusion, and as dark as the Author of it; I do not mean of his Person, but of the dark Power of Confusion and Enmity that too much abounds in him.

He insinuates from the Query, as if I said, Mankind must be punished by an Absolute Decree from Eternity, before he had a Being, or could sin against the Lord, and wrongs the Text, and saith, ' It is impossible that Man should
 ' be punished before he had a Being: When the Query saith, *If Man must be punished by an Absolute Decree from Eternity*, which is according to their Confession of Faith; and this Decree from Eternity must be before Man had a Being, or could sin against the Lord.

His Answer to Query 30. is, Page 97. ' There's
 ' Reason enough for the Prophet to shew Man
 ' what is Good, because some of all sorts shall attain to this Good. Prophets and Preachers are
 ' principally

‘ principally designed for inducing the Elect to
 ‘ repent and believe, &c. And God shews what
 ‘ is good for the Elects sake chiefly; and if others
 ‘ will not embrace this offered Good, it is their
 ‘ own fault.

Reply. This is according to our Principle: But according to theirs, it cannot be their own fault; as saith their Confession of Faith, viz. ‘ God from
 ‘ all Eternity did freely and unchangeably ordain
 ‘ whatsoever comes to pass. And by the Decree
 ‘ of God, for the Manifestation of his Glory, some
 ‘ Men and Angels are predestinated unto Ever-
 ‘ lasting Life, and others fore-ordained to Ever-
 ‘ lasting Death. And farther, ‘ These Men and
 ‘ Angels, thus predestinated and fore-ordained,
 ‘ are particularly and unchangeably designed, and
 ‘ their Number so certain and definite, that it
 ‘ cannot be either increased or diminished. By
 this Doctrine, such as he counts for *Reprobates*, except he makes nothing of the Decree, are particularly and unchangeably designed for Everlasting Death, and their Number so certain and so definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished; pray then what avails Preaching to such, or Prayers and Supplications for such? And for the latter part of this Answer, I have already Reply’d to the Substance of it (in Reply to his 20th) therefore shall pass it by here.

In his Answer to Query 31. he saith, Page 98.
 ‘ Why may not the Prophet say, *The Lord is slow*
 ‘ *to Anger?* God decreed nothing in Anger.

Reply. I do not believe that the Lord did in his Anger unchangeably decree from all Eternity the greatest part of Mankind to Eternal Reprobation: Yet the Prophet saith to *Israel*, in the Name of the Lord, *I gave thee a King in mine Anger,*

Anger, and took him away in my Wrath. Also the Author to the Hebrews saith, concerning the Rebellious Israelites, who provoked the Lord to that degree, that he was grieved with them; *So be sure in his Wrath, they should not enter into his Rest:* By which he may see the Lord did declare, or decree in his Anger.

He saith, 'God is slow to Anger, even to Reprobates themselves, whilst they are fitting themselves for Destruction by their Sin. See *Rom. 9. 22. Endured with much Long-suffering the Vessels of Wrath, &c.*

In Reply to which, I shall say, In this we do agree, according to the Text, that the Lord endured them with much Long-suffering, whilst they fitted themselves for Destruction, by reason of going on in Sin; and became Vessels of Wrath, by slighting God's Favour continued to them, during the Day of their Visitation: Which may be proved by many Instances.

The rest of his Answer destroys his own Argument, and he therein seems to be of our Opinion; therefore I shall say nothing against it.

His Answer to Query 32. is, Page 99. 'The Prophet *Habakkuk* joins the End and the Means together. The End was, to know what God would say to him; and he useth the Means to attain the End, viz. Watching or waiting upon God in the way of Duty. He did not say, *If God hath any thing to say to me, he'll say it, tho' I do not attend upon him;* this is your way of Arguing.

Reply. Nay; we are of the Prophet's mind, in Watching diligently, and Waiting upon God; and if we argue, as aforesaid, it is not from our own Principle, but only as is deducible from the Predestinarian Doctrine, let them cover it over as smooth as they can. The

The rest of his Charges in this Answer are altogether false. It is the Doctrine of Absolute Predestination doth say, 'These Angels and Men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their Number so certain and definite, that it cannot be increased or diminished. *Observe*, The word *Cannot* makes it Absolute and Impossible to alter, either by Good or Evil Works, according to their Doctrine, being decreed from Eternity, which was before either Good or Evil Works could be brought forth. And therefore such as are designed for Everlasting Death, the Consequence of their Doctrine makes it unalterable: And it cannot be believed otherwise, except we should forego our Understandings and Reason.

In Answer to Query 33. he saith, Page 100. 'It was because they had sinned that this Ruine was threatned against 'em. They suffer'd for their Sins: But what then? Doth it follow, that if Men suffer for their Sins, there's therefore no Decree? For you design to insinuate in this, and most of your Queries, that if God punish Men for their Sins, he hath not decreed to permit them; and if God have decreed to save Men, therefore he hath not determined to sanctifie them: But what God hath joined together, let no Man put asunder. Beware of putting your Lyes upon God's Trnth. We shall not farther enlarge here, lest we weary the Reader with Repetitions.

Reply. It's false for him to say, that I design to insinuate, *that if God punishes Men for their Sins, he doth not permit them*; because I deny his Absolute and Unconditional Decree from all Eternity to punish the greatest part of Mankind. And it's also false to charge me with saying or insinuating, *that*

that I deny those that are saved should be sanctified. And therefore let him take home his own Caution, and beware of putting his Lyes upon God's Truth or me. So let it rest upon him.

To that part of my Query 34. which he saith needs Answering, viz. *Was it God's Decree that his House should lie waste?* He Answers, 'It was God's Decree.

Reply. This wants Proof, that it was God's Decree from all Eternity that his House should lie waste; and his Quotation out of *Daniel* doth not prove it: For tho' the People went into Captivity, and God's House did lie waste; it doth not therefore follow, that he from all Eternity decreed it. And he grants, God did not decree his People might be punished; and, I am persuaded, he can never prove he ordained or decreed they should Sin; which is that which he saith God punishes Men for, and not for the Decree: And if he can by Holy Scripture prove such a Decree, that Men shall not be punished for, let him.

His Answer to Query 35. is, Page 101. 'God hath decreed to give all Things to his Elect upon Condition, either on Condition of what Christ has done for them, or what he will work in them. 'God for Christ's sake gives all to the Elect that he requires of them; as in this Instance of *Joshua*. 'God promised to make him a Chief Officer in his House; and to enable him to do that, he takes away his Sin.

Reply. He abuses the Text, which saith, *Now Joshua was clothed with filthy Garments, and stood before the Angel. And he answered, and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy Garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused*
 thing

thine Iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with Change of Raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair Mitre upon his Head: so they set a fair Mitre upon his Head, and clothed him with Garments. And, as may be seen by what is above said, it was after that the Conditional Promise was made, and that the Angel protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord, If thou wilt walk in my Ways, and keep my Charge, then thou shalt judge my House, and shalt also keep my Courts, and I will give thee places amongst those that stand by. But although Joshua was so favour'd of the Lord, who also rebuked Satan, that stood at his right Hand to resist him; yet a good State may soon be lost: And therefore the Apostle gave this Exhortation, Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an Evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, whilst it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of Sin, &c. Whereby it is obvious, there are Conditions to be observed, in order to be kept in the Favour of God.

His Answer to Query 36. is, Page 102. 'I wonder how People can pretend to Inspiration, that are so dry for want of Matter, as to ask the very same Question so often over. You might have multiplied your 48 Queries to 4000, if you will still ask the same over again, and call it another Query, because you abuse another Scripture.

Reply. It is not for want of Matter; but to let the Unbysessed see, that the whole Tenure of the Scripture, rightly understood, runs against their Predestinarian Doctrine. But it is not still the same, though it be still against the same Doctrine, as I said before; and there's not one of them I have brought, that is directly Answered, but by Shuffles and Evasions. My Queries were grounded upon

upon their Absolute Decree from Eternity; and there's but one Answered in the Affirmative, and that by no Proof from Scripture. It is more abuse of Scripture to curtail, as he hath done, than to bring it *Verbatim*. For when the Scripture doth manifestly Contradict him, then he would have us believe it with the Meaning he puts upon it; and saith, We must understand it so, as he hath defined it to us: When the Apostle saith, *it is of no private Interpretation, but is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness; that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works, &c.* This Author complains hard; if he had such abundance of Matter, he need not to have made so many Complaints of a little Book, the greatest part Scripture. But he himself wants right Matter, poor Man; many of his Answers being meer Humane Reason, pack'd up with never a word of Scripture; and those he brings, both not prove their Absolute Decree from Eternity.

In his Answer to Query 37. he saith, Page 103. 'The Reader may observe, that there's nothing new in this Query, only a new Scripture.

Reply. Whether it be New or Old, he hath not Answered it; viz. *Whether they were cursed, because they did not give Glory to God's Name, or because of an Absolute Decree from Eternity.* If their Doctrine of *Absolute Predestination* were agreeable to Scripture, he might easily do it; but because there's no Proof from Scripture, for his Absolute Unscriptural Predestination, he's pinch'd sorely.

He saith, 'God will bring a Curse on all who continue in their Sins; and the Consideration of this awakens some out of the Sleep of Sin; yet notwithstanding some sleep on.

Reply.

Reply. The Scripture here, I suppose, is too hard for him; seeing he doth not answer punctually this part, no more than he hath done the other. If People sleep in their Sins; it is no wonder; their Predestinarian Doctrine gives abundance of ground for it: To put People in a Belief, that if they observe this or the other Duty, all which may be done in a Man's own Will, without the help of the Spirit, such an one is *one of the Elect*; and then, if he takes pleasure in his Sins, God will not reward him according to his Works; Christ will die, rather than he shall die: God will take Vengeance only on their Inventions, and will not desert their Persons. Such, with the Slaggard may say, *Yet a little Sleep, yet a little Slumber, and a little folding of the Hands to sleep; till their Poverty comes as one that travelles, and their Want as an armed Man*; if the Scripture may be believed, and not his corrupt Meanings.

In Answer to Query 38. he saith, 'This Doctrine makes not the Coming of Christ void, but manifests the Infalible Certainty of our Saviour's attaining the End of his Coming.'

Reply. How doth this Predestinarian Doctrine manifest the Infalible Certainty of our Saviour's attaining the End of his Coming, if the Number be so certain and so definite, that there cannot be any added or diminished, according to their *Confession of Faith*? The Consequence of this Doctrine is, that Christ can add none to the Number, but those who are already designed. Therefore, according to their Doctrine, Christ's Coming, Sermons, Prayers, Death, Resurrection, or Ascension, will not do 'em any good; for the Decree must stand, whether for Salvation or Damnation.

He saith, 'If there had not been an Absolute Election,

‘ Election, Christ would not have died. He would
 ‘ not have come, and died at Uncertainties. He
 ‘ would not be referr’d to the fallen Will of Man
 ‘ for the Reward of his Work. Christ had the
 ‘ Elect given to him before-hand, and these he was
 ‘ obliged to bring in. He knew for whom he dy’d
 ‘ and pray’d, viz. for his Sheep. And as he saith
 elsewhere in this Answer, ‘ None can be saved by
 ‘ Christ, but the Elect.

Reply. This Doctrine doth manifestly Contradict
 the Apostle, viz. *My little Children, these things*
write I unto you, that ye sin not : But if any Man sin,
we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the
Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins, and
not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World.
 And also the Apostle Paul in these words, *I exhort*
therefore that first of all Supplications, Prayers, Inter-
cessions, and giving of Thanks be made for all Men, &c.
For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our
Saviour, who will have all Men to be saved, and come
to the knowledge of the Truth. There is one God, and
one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ
Jesus; who gave himself a Ransom for All, to be testi-
fied in due time.

Now, whether we should believe the Apostles,
 or this Author’s Definitions, let the Unprejudiced
 judge. They (viz. the Apostles) are not of this
 narrow Mind, to confine Christ’s Sufferings and
 Death only to a few, which he calls the *Elect*;
 and though Christ at that time might pray in par-
 ticular for the Disciples, or his Sheep, (as saith
 this Author) yet he did not always so, except he
 accounts Christ’s Murtheres (as he calls them in
 another place) his Sheep; for he prays for them,
 see *Luke 23. 34.* And he also taught his Disciples, say-
 ing, *Pray for them which despighfully use you, and per-*
secute you, that ye may be the Children of your Father
 which

which is in Heaven: For he maketh his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain on the Just and on the Unjust. Whereby may be understood, his Goodness is extended to all, and he would have them to be like-minded, and be their Example to do good unto all.

He saith, *'All that thou hast given me, I have kept, and none of them was lost. Judas was lost, but he was not Elected.*

Reply. How doth he prove that Judas was not Elected? He was Chosen. Does not the word Elect signifie Choice? And he had received part of the Ministry and Apostleship. And when the Apostles were about choosing another in his room, it was said, that he might take part of this Ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas by Transgression fell. Which implies, he was once in a good State, but fell from it. And the Angels, which kept not their first Estate, (or, as the Margent hath it, Principality) but left their own Habitation, he hath reserved in Chains, under Darknes, unto the Judgment of the great Day. Which also doth signifie, they were once in a good State. It was after Judas fell, that it was said concerning him, He might go to his own place with the fallen Angels; as it was said concerning them, That they were reserved in everlasting Chains, &c. Whereby it is obvious, God will Reward every Man according as his Works shall be.

He saith, *'And yet the Reason why the rest are not saved, is, their persevering in Infidelity and Impenitency, which is chargeable on none but themselves.*

Reply. He has now laid aside their Absolute Decree, and is here of our Opinion, as if it were only Chargeable upon themselves: As indeed it is according to Christ's own Saying to the Jews, viz. Search the Scriptures, in them ye think to have Eternal

Life; they are they which testifie of me: But you will not come unto me that you may have Life. Although they heard him, yet they would not receive his Doctrine into their Hearts: For as many as received him, to them he gave Power, even to as many as believed in his Name. Which doth hold forth the Universality of the Love of God to Mankind in general.

In his Answer to Query 39. he saith, Page 105.
 ‘ The Decree hinder’d him not from believing in
 ‘ Christ, farther than Christ’s denying to him the
 ‘ Faith of God’s Elect.

Observe, Reader, how he hath here quitted the young Man of Blame, and laid it upon the Lord Jesus, as if he deny’d to give him the Faith of God’s Elect. The Consequence of which Doctrine is, That *Christ* told him upon what Condition he might inherit Eternal Life only to mock him, and that he never intended he should inherit it; although it is said in Scripture, *He had kept God’s Commandments from his Youth up, and Jesus loved him.* From whence it may be inferr’d, he would have had him observe what would have made him perfect; for so said our Lord unto him, *Wouldst thou be perfect? go and sell what thou hast, and give it to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven; and come, take up thy Cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that Saying, and went away grieved, for he had great Possessions.* How is it then obvious to any Rational Man, that our Lord Jesus was the Cause of this Man’s deserting Christ? Was it not rather his Possessions, which he loved better than the Lord Jesus. From the Nature of God and Christ, they go below the Nature of Rational Men, to lay the stress where it ought not.

He farther saith, ‘ It did not belong to him,
 (viz. the Faith of God’s Elect.) ‘ God is neither
 ‘ obliged,

'obliged, nor has engaged to give every Man
'Faith?

Reply. Let him prove that the Faith of God's Elect belonged not to him, and why. If he had observed Christ's Command, it had belong'd to him, (which was possible) through that Manifestation of the Spirit which is given to every one to profit withal. But he gives that as his Reason why all Men hath not Faith; but doth it therefore follow, they might not have had Faith, had they received Christ? Inasmuch as the Apostle said, *God hath dealt to every Man the measure of Faith*; but if they make shipwrack of it, it must necessarily follow, they first had it, or they could not make shipwrack of that they never had; and that it might be done, he brings Example of some that did it, viz. *Hymenæus and Alexander*.

He saith, 'The Election hath obtained it, and
'the rest were blinded.

Reply. It was *because of Unbelief they were hardened*, for so it is in the Margin; *and thou standest by Faith: Be not high-minded, but fear*; which is a good Exhortation to us, who are supposed to be of *Japhet's Stock*, of whom the *Isles of the Gentiles* were divided: For if God spared not the *Natural Branches*, said he, *take heed lest he also spare not you*.

But, in Contradiction to what he said before, he now saith, 'The culpable Cause of this Man's deserting Christ, was his Love to the World.

Reply. He might have said so at the first, and not go to and fro, and now come to it; we should then soon have agreed. But if we should trace him in all his Windings and Turnings, we should find him like the Mole, his Paths are Darkness.

And now again he saith, 'He wanted Faith to overcome the World; and that was because Christ deny'd to give him the Faith of God's Elect. And

‘ as to our Saviour’s offering him Eternal Life upon
 ‘ Condition, we say again, that God’s offering such
 ‘ and such things conditionally, does not oblige
 ‘ him to give the Power for the Performance of
 ‘ these Conditions.

Reply. As much as to say, although he offers it,
 he doth not intend to do it.

He saith, ‘ *God is the Lord*, and therefore may
 ‘ make General Offers, and command All to Ac-
 ‘ cept it, and yet give the Ability to whom he
 ‘ pleaseth.

Reply. This doth manifestly Contradict the Testi-
 monies that are given of God in Scripture; and
 nothing ought to be believed that contradicts, that
God is Gracious, Merciful, Long-suffering, Love, and
 many more Attributes. And how is Love mani-
 fested, if God doth proffer and command, and doth
 not give Power to obey? This would be worse
 than *Pharaoh*: For though he with-held Straw, he
 allowed them Stubble; whereby it was possible,
 through hard Labour, to effect the Work. But by
 this Doctrine they make God or Christ to with-
 hold that which would effect the Means of Salva-
 tion through Grace, *viz.* Faith, without which it
 is impossible to please God.

His Answer to Query 40. is, Page 106. ‘ The
 ‘ Texts you have here quoted, if rightly under-
 ‘ stood, are very agreeable to the Predestinarian
 ‘ Doctrine, and do not at all signifie God’s loving
 ‘ all Men alike.

Reply. We do not say that God loves all Men a-
 like. It was said, There was a *Disciple whom Jesus*
loved, who may be supposed was *John*; it did not
 therefore follow, that he did not love the rest.
 But he might exceed the rest in Innocency, as he
 spake concerning *Nathaniel*, an *Israelite indeed*, in
 whom

whom there was no Guile: Norwithstanding, when the Spirit was poured forth upon them, it was sufficient for the least or weakest of them: So we say, God hath given to every one a Manifestation of the Spirit; and as it was, so it is given to profit withal; as was spoken concerning them that had the Talents, such who did improve them, had the Answer of *Well-done, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.*

He farther saith, 'Sometimes *All* in Scripture, signifies a great many: For Instance, *Luke 2. 1. And it came to pass in those Days, that there went out a Decree from Cesar Augustus that all the World should be taxed. All the World* here cannot be understood of every individual Person in the World. For *Augustus* had but part of the World in his Power, and could Tax none but his own Subjects.

Reply. The Margin saith *Enrolled*; and if he would have gone to the utmost, he might have gone far beyond them who were his own Subjects, as some Princes delighted to do; and he was called the *mightiest Prince in the World*; and the Margin hath it, *he stretched his Empire so far as the Romans.*

Again, This Limitation cannot be put upon the Lord; He had and hath Power over the whole World, and therefore ought not to be confined and limited, as Earthly Princes. *God is the Lord,* whose Power is infinite, before whom *all Nations are as the Drop of a Bucket, and as the small Dust of the Ballance*; and, as the Prophet said, *sitteth upon the Circle of the Earth, and the Inhabitants thereof are as Grasshoppers*; *that stretcheth out the Heaven as a Curtain, and spreadeth them out as a Tent to dwell in*; *that bringeth the Princes to nothing, and maketh the Judges of the Earth as Vanity.* To whom then will ye

like *me*? or shall I be equal, saith the Holy One? Who said by his Angel, Behold, I bring you good Tidings of great Joy, which shall be to all People: For unto you is born this Day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord: A full and positive Position; from whence he was called the Lord: But they expected to have found him in a more Honourable Place; yet, to prevent their Mistake, he saith, *This shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling Clothes, and lying in a Manger.* And too too many in our Day do mistake his Appearance in Spirit, accounting it Insufficient; but those that Believe in it, and Obey it, do find it Sufficient; as may be proved from J. A's own Testimony.

The rest of his Answer is Paraphrasing upon the word *All*, which he would restrict to a Few, to answer their Principle, viz. *the Absolute Decree from Eternity*; which I have Answered in several Replies before, and do here deny his Position as Unscriptural, with all that is argued from it.

In his Answer to Query 41. he saith, Page 107.
 ‘ This Query is the same with the former. Here is
 ‘ an Argument for Universal Grace taken from the
 ‘ Words of our Saviour, *John 3. 16. God so loved*
 ‘ *the World, &c. God sent not his Son to condemn the*
 ‘ *World, &c.* May not one be said to love a Family,
 ‘ when he shews Kindness to all in it, but yet is
 ‘ pleased to distinguish by his Donations? *Abra-*
 ‘ *ham* gave Gifts to all his Children, but he settled
 ‘ the Inheritance upon *Isaac*. So the whole World
 ‘ is better for Christ, tho’ but some in the World
 ‘ are saved by him.

Reply. How is Love shewn by the Lord Jesus to a Family, according to their Doctrine, if he regards but One to settle the Inheritance upon; as by

by his Comparison concerning *Abraham's* settling the Inheritance upon *Isaac*? How is the whole World better'd by Christ, if he grants not that they were put into a Capacity by him to be saved? But their not accepting or receiving, but rejecting Christ, and remaining in Unbelief; his Coming, and offering Life unto them, render'd them more Inexcusable, than if they had not had the Benefit thereof. For it is said, *John 3. 19. This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil. And Chap. 15. 22. If I had not come, and spoken unto them, they had not had Sin; but now they have no cloke for their Sin.*

He saith, 'The World here may be understood of *Elect Jews and Gentiles*, as before.

Reply. Must he then expound to us how we must understand it, without any Proof? That would be to lead us Blindfold indeed, as some of his Hearers are. But we are not to Believe so slightly concerning a Matter of such great Importance: We'll rather Believe the Lord Jesus Christ, than his Unscriptural Definitions. The Words of our Saviour are very plain, *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* He would have all the Scripture defined, to look like their Absolute Decree, which he can never get done. The rest I've answer'd, in Reply to other Answers.

In his Answer to Query 42. he saith, Page 108.
'There's nothing of what you expect in this Text.
'It is far from holding forth, either God's regarding all Men alike, or all Men receiving alike from God.

Reply. It is a false Suggestion; we hold neither of these: But do say, as the Apostle doth, *God is*

no Respector of Persons; for in every Nation, they that fear God, and work Righteousness, are accepted with him. And to enable Mankind to do this, Christ gives Power; according to that Saying, He came to his own, and his own received him not; but to as many as received him, to them he gave Power to become the Sons of God, even to as many as believed in his Name, whether Jew or Gentile: And if Sons, then Heirs, and Joint-Heirs with Christ. And such do not come short of the Inheritance; and if any do come short, it is because they neglect to receive Christ and his Doctrine into their Hearts, as to obey and walk according thereto; for he is the Author of Eternal Salvation to all that obey him.

His Answer to Query 43. is, Page 109. ‘ Here you would have the latter *All*, as large as the former *All*; but that Sense would contradict other Scriptures, and God’s Dispensation in all Ages, &c. Now if the latter *All* be as large as the former, then All Men in the World are justified by Christ, for All universally Sinned in Adam. And if this be the Sense, it will follow that All Persons in the World shall be saved; for the same Apostle saith, *Whom he justified, them he also glorified.* So that, according to your Doctrine, Hell shall be empty, and all promiscuously press into Heaven.

Reply. The latter *All* may be and is as large as the former *All*, and doth not contradict the Scriptures, nor God’s Dispensations in all Ages; neither are all Men in the World justified by Christ: Neither, according to this Doctrine, shall Hell be empty, nor all promiscuously pressing into Heaven. He need not question that Hell will be empty, whilst He and his Brethren maintain such wicked, erroneous, licentious Doctrine: People are too ready to take an easie Way, and shun the Cross. This
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Author hath bundled a great deal of his confused stuff together (whereby his Ignorance is more seen) no way applicable to the aforesaid Doctrine, no doubt on purpose to make it look Erroneous. I do wonder he is not ashamed to put such Constructions upon the plain Words of Scripture, which are very easie to be understood; except Enmity towards us hath darkned his Mind, that he will not understand them as we do, though it be never so right. The Words are, *As by the Offence of One, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation; so by the Righteousness of One, the Free-gift is come upon all Men to Justification of Life*: As much as to say, All have the Offer of Justification by this Free-Gift; but it doth not therefore follow, that all do embrace it. *Jerusalem* had this Offer, and she refused it; concerning whom our Lord took up this Lamentation, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy Children together, as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, but ye would not?* And the Hen would gather All: Which doth signifie, the latter *All* is as large as the former *All*. And the envious Jews also had this Offer, as in the following Lines may be seen; but they refused it, and spake against those things spoken by *Paul*, contradicting and blaspheming. Then *Paul* and *Barnabas* waxed bold, and said, *It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing you put it from you, and judge your selves unworthy of everlasting Life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.* Many Instances might be brought, but by these it may be seen, he misinterprets the aforesaid Scripture, and would take away from it, that which makes against their Doctrine of *Absolute Predestination*; and paraphrasing upon it, he saith, *Who is it that Preaches licentious Doctrine, you or we?* The latter part of his Answer, I have Answer'd already in other Replies.

His

His Answer to Query 44. is, Page 110. ' This Query is grounded on another *All*; and for the sake of this *General Principle*, this Scripture is stretched beyond its Design.

Reply. I deny that I have stretched the Scripture beyond its Design: It is set down *Verbatim*, and that cannot stretch it. I would not have him complain of the Apostle's Words: For not one Word that he hath Paraphras'd upon is mine; neither is the Query Answered, which was, *If Christ died for all, then where's the Number decreed for Damnation, or that have not the Offer of Salvation by Christ?* But he cannot Answer me, and therefore Fights with the plain Words of the Apostle, because it is a manifest Contradiction to their Doctrine of *Absolute Predestination*, and therefore would have it limited. So that the Saying of the Apostle is fulfilled in them, *The time is come when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own Lusts shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears: and they shall turn away their Ears from the Truth, and shall be turned unto Fables*, 2 Tim. 4. 3. And of this sort is my Opponent; he must have the Scripture clipp'd and minc'd: It will not serve him as the Apostle laid it down, who tells us, *The Scriptures are of no private Interpretation, but were given by Inspiration, and are profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.* His last Answer is of the same Nature with this, (*viz.* Cavilling with the Apostle) which I have fully Reply'd to, and shall now proceed to the next.

In Answer to Query 45. he saith, Page 112. ' There's need of Persuasion both for the Elect and the rest. God hath Elected no Man to die in his Sins, but to turn and live, &c. Did Peter's Persuasions

'suasions signifie nothing to the Three Thousand
'that was converted at one Sermon.

Reply. If the Number was so certain and so definite, as you in your *Confession of Faith* say, that it cannot be either increased or diminished, no Sermons or Persuasions whatsoever could signifie any thing. But I shall give the Reason why *Peter's* Persuasions were available: *First*, Because he did not speak from the Divination of his own Brain, nor was his Eye after Lucre; but being Inspired by the Holy Ghost, he spoke as the Spirit gave him utterance; which did so effectually reach their Understandings, that they were brought over to the Faith of Jesus. And herein was fulfilled the Prophecy of the Prophet *Joel*, viz. *It shall come to pass in the last Days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall prophesie, and your young Men shall see Visions, and your old Men shall dream Dreams: And on my Servants and on my Handmaidens I will pour out of my Spirit, and they shall prophesie.* *Secondly*, Because it is not according to your Doctrine of *Absolute Predestination*; that would make *Peter's* excellent Sermon altogether Ineffectual, if the Number be so certain and so definite, that it cannot be (*observe*, that which cannot, is impossible to be) either increased or diminished.

He farther saith, 'And God's own Means shall
'attain his own End, both upon the Elect and the
'rest. Persuasions are not in vain to the Repro-
'bates; for they may and shall, if God please, Re-
'strain them, tho' not Renew them: And these
'Persuasions and Exhortations will leave the Re-
'probates without Excuse, who have boasted so
'much of their Free-will, and yet would never use
'it to comply with God's Persuasions.

Reply. By this it appears, he is got into the Seat
of Judgment, as if he knew who were the Repro-
bates

bates by their Boasting. But I do not question, if such, whom he accounts Reprobates, would joyn with them in their Performances, and continue with them, (all which may be done without any thing of Regeneration) he would change his Opinion of them. All this is but Judging at Uncertainties; for the Scripture is silent: Except he'll say, 'tis *Revealed to him*; and we should not believe him, if he did say so, because it is contrary to the Scripture.

His Answer to Query 46. is, Page 113. 'Here's a Query grounded upon *Every*, as the former was upon *All*; but these general Terms are to be understood in a limited Sense: For if the Apostles warned *every Man* in the *Quakers* Sense, they were obliged to preach to all, and every Person in the whole World.

Reply. How doth he know what the *Quakers* Sense is? We have not yet told him. But it is most certain, the Apostle did faithfully execute his Apostleship, in bringing Men to Christ, in every place where he came: So that from *Jerusalem* round about to *Illyricum*, he preached in every place; and also where *Christ* was not named, that he might not build upon another Man's Foundation; and doubtless for that End, that *he might present every Man perfect in Christ Jesus*; for it must be *in Him*, if any Man be perfect. And he was then writing to the *Colossians*, who were brought to the Faith of Jesus; and it was not impossible to warn every Man amongst them: And if he will cavil at the Apostle's Words, let him; it is neither the *Quakers* Sense nor Saying, that they could *preach to all*, in every place in the whole World. He saith nothing of that part of the *Query* which was mine, but leaves it as unanswerable: And I have Reply'd to the other part of his Answer before.

His

His Answer to Query 47. is, Page 114. ' This
 ' general *All* must be understood with the former
 ' Limitation. If God's Will in the Text be under-
 ' stood of the Decree, then the Meaning is, that
 ' God hath willed the Salvation of all those whom
 ' he hath Elected, and will have all those Men and
 ' Women saved; and therefore he'll make them
 ' meet for that Salvation. But if by the Will of
 ' God be meant, the Will of his Precepts, then you
 ' may understand it Universally; for God by his
 ' Commands makes it every Man's Duty to Believe
 ' and Repent, that they may be saved.

Reply. By this it may be inferr'd, God hath Two
 Wills: 1. That of the *Decree*: For if there be such
 a thing from Eternity, it must be his Will; and it
 were Nonsense to conclude, that a Decree should
 be made in Eternity contrary to the Will of God.
 And, 2. That concerning the *Will of his Precepts*:
 Let him explain what he Means by the *Will of his*
Precepts, seeing it is not Scriptural. If it be his
 Commands that are laid down in Scripture, whe-
 ther by *Christ*, or his *Apostles*, or the *Prophets*, or the
Ten Commandments; all these his Commands ought
 to be believed and obeyed: For *Obedience*, in the
 Time of the Law, when all the Offerings were
 in force, was counted *better than Sacrifice*; and to
hearken, than the Fat of Rams. And it is said, *The*
Willing and Obedient shall eat the Good of the Land: But
 if you *refuse and rebel*, ye shall be *devoured with the*
Sword; *The Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*. And
 it is said concerning Christ our Lord, *Though he was*
a Son, yet he learned Obedience by the things which he
suffered; and being made perfect, he became the *Author*
of Eternal Salvation unto all them that obey him. A
 Volume might be fill'd of the Advantages of the Obe-
 dient to the known Will and Command of the Lord.
 But on the contrary, *He that knows his Master's Will,*
 and

and doth it not, must be beaten with many Stripes. Many also are the Disadvantages of the Disobedient. Now this Will, which he calls *the Will of his Precepts*, we may from his own Words understand it universally: For God, saith he, *makes it every Man's Duty to Believe and Repent, that he may be saved.* This is that which belongs to us, as I have before mentioned, which we ought to believe and obey: But to plead for that which is manifestly opposite to what is commanded by God in Scripture, is erroneous: Therefore to say, God has a secret Will, opposite to his Will, that's laid down in Scripture, is erroneous.

He saith, 'Do you think that God equally wills the Salvation of all, one as well as another?

Reply. God has assured us by the greatest of Certainties, (*viz. As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the Death of the Wicked*) that he wills the Salvation of all: And therefore to enable all to turn from their Wickedness, *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men; Teaching us, said the Apostle, that denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lust, we should live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World, &c.*

He saith, 'If it be so, then how doth God attain his Will, when so many of those he has willed to be saved come short of Salvation? Is not God then frustrated of his Will?

Reply. It is said, *Because I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded; but you have set at naught all my Counsel, and would have none of my Reproof: I also will laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your Fear cometh, see Proverbs 1. 24, to the end. Also Isaiah 65. Therefore I will number you to the Sword, and ye shall all bow down to the Slaughter; because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine*

mine Eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not. All these Scriptures do manifestly hold forth, that Mankind are free Agents, and may choose that which the Lord delights not in, and so fall short of Salvation: Also may choose Good, if they observe the Voice of Wisdom, and turn at her Reproof, she will pour out of her Spirit unto them, and make known her Words unto them.

He saith, 'Doth he receive any Information from what falls out in Time?

Reply. To this I have answer'd already.

He saith, 'Consider what Absurdities and Blasphemies are included in your Doctrine.

Reply. It cannot be Absurd or Blasphemous to believe and obey the Will and Commands of God, as laid down in Holy Writ: Therefore Absurdities and Blasphemies cannot be included in our Doctrine. And my Opponent holds forth, that God by the *Will of his Precepts* commands all to believe and obey him.

'God, *saith he*, by his Commands makes it every Man's Duty to Believe and Repent, that he may be saved. *Again*, 'God will have all his Elect saved; and he wills it the Duty of the rest, to accept of his Son, that they may be delivered from Wrath to come.

Observe, *Reader*, how he maintains the same Doctrine which he accounts Absurdities and Blasphemous in us: And yet in plain Contradiction thereto, he queries, *Doth God will what he cannot effect? Or, is he frustrated of his Will?* And positively asserts, *God wills what he doth not effect*; because it is their Belief, 'God hath decreed from Eternity a certain Number to Eternal Reprobation; and the Number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

But for Two Reasons, I do not so much wonder at

at this Author's Blindness and Contradiction, viz. The Love of Lucre on the one hand, and Enmity to us on the other; which, may be supposed, makes him so extremely expose himself in so many Self-Contradictions in his Answers.

In Answer to Query 48. he saith, Page 115. ' I am now come to the last, which is but the same ' thing over again, with another Scripture. As I ' have observed before, God wills the perishing of ' none, either as the End of his Creation, or the ' End of his Purpose. The Lord made all things ' for himself, even the Wicked for the Day of ' Evil.

Reply. It is the Scripture I wou'd have him Answer; and if his Doctrine were according thereto, it might be easily done: And if it be the same thing, one might think it would not be so uneasie to him. What serves the Eternal Decree for then? Was it not to effect his Purpose? This Author takes upon him to Contradict the Apostle, but to little purpose; for People may see his Confusion. Was not the Apostle capable, who understood the Mind of God, without this Author's Definitions? who plainly said, *The Lord was not slack concerning his Promise; and not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to Repentance.* These Words of the Apostle needs no Definition: And if we must not believe such plain Words of Scripture, without having them made like a *Nose of Wax*, to turn which way he'll have it, to answer his confused, dark, promiscuous Positions; then, by this Rule, all things will be turn'd *Topse-turvy*, and no distinguishing Truth from Error.

He saith, ' The Lord made all things for himself, ' yea, even the Wicked for the Day of Evil.

Reply. But the wise Man doth not say, God made them

them wicked for the Day of Evil; that would contradict that Scripture, where it is said, *And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold, it was very good*: And this was said after all the Creation was finished; and Man must of necessity be included, being the Noblest Part of the Creation of God: For if the Inferiour Part of the Creation was Good, how much more Man, the Noblest Part? And also in *Eccles. 38.* it is said, *All the Works of the Lord are exceeding Good.* So that it cannot be concluded, that God made any Man wicked; for that is bad, and cannot be imputed to God, but to the wicked One, the old implacable Enemy, the Devil.

He saith, 'This Scripture doth not mean, that God hath purposed to bring all to Repentance. He commands all Men every where to Repent; but this Command neither obliges God to give Repentance, nor imports Man's Ability to obey the Command. God commanded *Pharaoh* to let his People go; but he had not the Grace of Obedience, either in himself, or conferr'd upon him.

Reply. Observe, he hath given the Apostle the Contradiction, and brings *Pharaoh* for a Proof, that he had not the Grace of Obedience; but it doth not therefore follow, he never had the Grace. He became a wicked oppressing Tyrant, and God spared him long, and brought one Plague after another; and when *Pharaoh*, through *Moses's* Prayer, saw he had Respite, he hardned his Heart, till the Lord gave him up to *Hardness of Heart*: So that his Servants saw beyond him, and said, *How long shall this Man be a Snare unto us? Let the Men go, that they may serve the Lord their God. Knowest thou not yet, that Egypt is destroyed?* And he, that was sought unto, time after time, to let *Israel* go, still refused; till at length, the Lord so plagued him,

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that

that he was made to drive them out of his Land; and in his Pursuit after them, the Sea overwhelm'd him. But doth this Author conclude, that God gives not the *Grace of Obedience*, as he calls it, to the greatest part of Mankind, because *Pharaoh* sinned out his Day? But if he calls that the *Grace of Obedience*, that brings *Salvation*; whatever he calls it, there's none exceeds it; and the Apostle saith, *it appeareth to all Men; Teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, we should live Soberly, and Righteously, and Godly in this present World.*

He saith, ' You bid us consider what kind of Doctrine this is, which gives God and Christ the Contradiction. I refer the Reader (saith J. A.) for his Satisfaction to our Proof of Election.

Reply. As if he had done some great matters there; when there's not one Proof from Scripture for their Absolute Unscriptural Predestinarian Doctrine: It's the Proof of that Doctrine that would Answer my *Queries*. There's but One *Query* Answer'd in the Affirmative, and no Proof from Scripture in that; but his Say-so is all.

He saith, ' We would hold this Doctrine no otherwise than as they held it, viz. *Moses* and the Prophets, *Christ* and his Apostles.

Reply. If you would hold it no otherwise than they held it, one might think, when you see there is not one Scripture (from the Beginning of *Genesis* to the End of the *Revelations*) doth prove, that God, by an Absolute Decree from Eternity, did ever Reprobate any Man, ye would persist no longer in that Belief: I challenge you therefore to prove it, or lay aside your Reprobate Doctrine, and no longer blind People with it. Their Clipping and Wrangling, Mincing and Curtailing the Words of the Prophets and Apostles, and saying, *This must be*

be understood so, and That must have this or that Definition, will not serve long; many are already come to see them, and I believe more will. And it is that Faith, *that was once delivered to the Saints*, I do earnestly Contend for, against such Heaps of Confusion, as in his Book are heap'd up together against the plain Words of the Prophets and Apostles; and not only theirs, but he would not let the Words of Christ go without his Definition, and would drive it on in opposition to the plain Text of Scripture. But it will prove like *Pharaoh's Chariots Wheels*, go on heavily for a while, and then be overturned in the Sea of God's Wrath, and hot Displeasure.

He saith, 'You again reflect on this Doctrine, as *opening a Door to Carelessness*. Pray instance who are thus loose and careless, that hold this Doctrine, according to the Word of God?

Reply. This Doctrine cannot be holden according to the Word of God, nor according to Scripture; there's no Scripture will hold it out; and it is a bad Cause that hath no Scripture to defend it, so is this Doctrine of Absolute Reprobation.

He saith, 'We cannot but tell you, that we never found any Savour of true Piety in any that were Enemies to this Doctrine.

Reply. You have either lost the Sense of Tasting then, or otherwise you never had it; for there's no Savour of true Piety in that Doctrine. It's to contradict the *clearest Ideas* we can have from Scripture, of the Justice, Mercy, Love, Truth, and Purity of God; and therefore ought not to be believed.

He saith, 'We cannot but think that Enmity to this Doctrine is inconsistent with true Love to God; for 'tis the Sense of God's peculiar Kindness that's the special Inducement to Love; *We love him, because he first loved us.*

Reply. To say so, is not enough, whilst corrupt Fruits are brought forth: *But if you have bitter Envy and Strife in your Hearts, glory not, and lye not against the Truth. This Wisdom descendeth not from above, but is Earthly, Sensual and Devilish: For where Envy and Strife is, there's Confusion and every Evil Work, James 4. 14, 15.*

He saith, 'But if this had been a general Love, it would have had the like Effect upon all its Objects. Men of the General Principle may love God in Word, but till they see more need of peculiar Grace from God, they'll scarce love him in Sincerity.

Reply. How doth it appear, by the Parable spoken by our Lord concerning the Talents, they had not the like Effect upon all that received them? and yet, if improved, no doubt would have gained the Answer of *Well done, good and faithful Servant, Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord.* And why peculiar Grace? Would they have a Grace more peculiar than that which hath appeared to all Men, that brings Salvation? Is it because they are better than others? This represents the Pharisee, who thanked God, he was not as other Men. But we ought to be content with that Grace that hath appeared to all Men; for the Apostle testified, that brought Salvation, and taught to deny Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, and to live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World.

He farther saith, 'You conclude with a sort of Prayer for the removing of the Vail of Ignorance and Blindness from us; the true Sense of your Prayer is, that we might be blinded by the God of this World, and puffed up with Pride, to think that we make our selves to differ; and to look upon God as uncertain in his Proceeding, till the Creature determine him.

Reply.

Reply. When the Children of Israel had sinned against the Lord, in making the Golden Calf, Moses earnestly interceded for them in this manner, *Oh this People have sinned a great Sin, and have made themselves Gods of Gold: Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their Sin; and if not, blot me out of thy Book, which thou hast written.* And the Lord said unto Moses, *Whosoever sinneth against me, him will I blot out of my Book.* Let him compare this Scripture with their Predestinarian Doctrine, and see if it doth not appear, that the Lord doth determine according to what the Creature acts: According to that Saying, *Behold, I come quickly, and my Reward is with me, to give to every Man as his Work shall be.* But to say, as he hath said concerning the Prayer, it is a most wicked, absurd, envious piece of Forgery. I have great cause to say, with David, *They wrest my Words; all their Thoughts are against me for Evil: They have rewarded me Evil for Good, and Hatred for my Love.* But I can appeal to the Unbyassed, how he could insinuate that the true Sense of it could be as aforesaid: And therefore I shall repeat the Words *verbatim*, that such as have not the Book, which his pretended *Answer* is to, may see whether or no he hath cause to complain, *viz.* "O that the Vail of Ignorance and Blindness, that is upon the Minds of the Maintainers of this Doctrine, were taken off, that they might come to see the Glory of the Pure Evangelical Doctrine and Ministry, wherein the Love of God is held forth to all the Sons and Daughters of Men, upon their Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, who tasted Death for every Man, Heb. 2. 9. And is the Propitiation for our Sins; and not for ours only, but also for the Sins of the whole World,"

World, 1 John 2, 2. The Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life, and besides whom, there is no Saviour.

He saith, ' If your Prayer be heard, we shall see no difference between the Love of God to those that are with him in Heaven, and those that are in Hell, but only that the former has made themselves more Amiable.

Reply. He may as well say, If the Words of the Apostles Paul and John may be believed for Truth, we shall see no difference between the Love of God to those that are in Heaven, and those that are in Hell, &c. We do not say, Man can make himself Amiable; but have said, *What we are, it is by the Grace of God*, according to the Apostle: And whether the Apostle's Doctrine, or their Predestinarian Doctrine, ought to be believed for Truth, let the Unprejudiced judge; for they are Contradictory to one another, and doth hold out the Substance of that Prayer, that puzzles him to that degree, that either the Scriptures, or their Predestinarian Doctrine must be deny'd. And therefore

He saith, ' We deprecate the Answering of this Petition, which is rather a Curse than a Prayer; And we say to you, as the Prophet to the King, Dan. 5. 17. *Let your Prayer be to your selves*.

Reply. His Comparison hath no Equality in it; but if it had been a Gift of Reward, or any thing of Lucre in the matter, (which Daniel had no Regard to, or Desire after) he would not then (is doubtful) have told of Deprecating of it, nor have counted it rather a Curse than a Prayer. It's a probable truth, that he cannot say as a good Man did, (viz. Samuel) *Of whose hands have I received any Bribe to blind mine Eyes therewith?* But rather say, *Of whose hands have I not received, either more*

or less? For it's probable, if it had not been for Lucre, he might have laboured at his old Craft; for it's possible he had more Skill in that, than in what he has now undertaken, and it would be less charge to his Conscience in the End.

He farther saith, 'Labour to see your own Blindness, and fear to be found Fighting against God.

Reply. I shall answer him with the Words of our Lord Jesus, who said, *Why beholdest thou the Mote that is in thy Brother's Eye, but considerest not the Beam that is in thine own Eye? Thou Hypocrite, first cast the Beam out of thine own Eye, and then thou shalt see clearly to cast the Mote out of thy Brother's Eye.* And who they are that fight against God, may be apparently seen by what this Author saith in his Answer to Query 9. 'How large soever Free-willers be in promising Obedience, yet they will fail in the Performance, till they act from better Principles than their natural Powers, tho' assisted with all the Universal Grace. See the Judgment of this Man, thus denying the Sufficiency of that Grace, which the Apostle saith, *bringeth Salvation, and hath appeared to all Men, &c.* and counting the Blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and doing despiht to the Spirit of Grace, Heb. 10. 29.

He saith, 'He hath Mercy on whom he will have Mercy, and whom he will he hardneth.

Reply. To this I have Answered before; yet shall say, *With the Lord there's Mercy and plenteous Redemption: And also the Lord is good to all; and his tender Mercies are over all his Works: And how much more to Man, whom he made in his own Image? till he hath sinned out his Day; and then, as saith the Apostle, The Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness*

...the whole Book in the
...which may be known by God in
...for God hath showed it unto them;
...Rom. 1. 18; 19; to the end.

And as to the Improvement and Proof of
Election, at the Fore-end of his Book, which he
refers to; there's nothing in his whole Book
(neither fore nor latter end) doth prove from
Scripture, That from Eternity, God did predestinate
or fore-ordain any Man for everlasting Death; as they
in their Confession of Faith, do positively assert.
And if he should say a Hundred times more than
he hath said, it still it's beside the Matter, he may
as well say nothing. My Queries were grounded
against their Predestinarian Doctrine of God's Ab-
solute Decree from Eternity, and he hath brought no
Proof from Scripture for it; and therefore they
are not yet Answered.

June Fearon.

Shotton, the 24th of the

11th Month, 1708.



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in the *manifestness of Atonement*, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them; see Rom. i. 18, 19, to the end.

And as to the Improvement and Proof of Election, at the Fore-end of his Book, which he refers to; there's nothing in his whole Book (neither fore nor latter end) doth prove from Scripture, That from Eternity, God did predestinate or fore-ordain any Man for everlasting Death; as they, in their Confession of Faith, do positively assert. And if he should say a Hundred times more than he hath said, if still it's beside the Matter, he may as well say nothing. My *Queries* were grounded against their Predestinarian Doctrine of God's Absolute Decree from Eternity, and he hath brought no Proof from Scripture for it; and therefore they are not yet Answered.

Jane Fearon.

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